THE SAN FRANCISCO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Alcove 15
Case 3
elf H
San Anselmo.

LIBRARY

OF THE

SAN FRANCISCO

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

UNDER THE CARE OF THE SYNOD OF THE PACIFIC.

Presented by REV. J. C. BACKUS, D. D.

LIBRARY
OF THE
SAN FRANCISCO THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY
SAN ANSELMO
CALIFORNIA

John C. Backus.

NEW COLLEGE—NORTH FRONT.

INAUGURATION

OF THE

NEW COLLEGE OF THE FREE CHURCH,

EDINBURGH:

NOVEMBER, M.DCCC.L.

WITH

INTRODUCTORY LECTURES

ON

THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY, AND NATURAL SCIENCE.

THE SAN FRANCISCO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY SAN ANSELMO, MARIN CO. CALIF.

San Francisco Theological Seminary Branch
2 Kensington Road, San Anselmo, CA 94960

JOHNSTONE AND HUNTER,
LONDON AND EDINBURGH.

M.DCCC.LI.

-F
025
N475
1861

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY JOHNSTONE & HUNTER
104 HIGH STREET.

CONTENTS.

Page

DISCOURSE by NATHANIEL PATERSON, D.D., Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church, ... 1

ADDRESS to the Professors and Students, by Dr PATERSON, . . 23

ADDRESS, by WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM, D.D., Principal, . . 39

INTRODUCTORY LECTURES.

CHURCH HISTORY. By WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM, D.D., Principal, and Professor of Theology and Church History, . . . 59

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY. By JAMES BUCHANAN, D.D., Professor of Theology, ... 79

APOLOGETICAL THEOLOGY AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH. By JAMES BANNERMAN, D.D., Professor of Theology, . . 101

THE THEOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By JOHN DUNCAN, LL.D., Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Languages, . . . 121

EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY. By ALEXANDER BLACK, D.D., Professor of Exegetical Theology, ... 143

LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS. By the Rev. A. C. FRASER, A.M., Professor of Logic and Metaphysics, ... 159

MORAL PHILOSOPHY. By PATRICK C. MACDOUGALL, Esq., Professor of Moral Philosophy, ... 189

NATURAL SCIENCE. By JOHN FLEMING, D.D., Professor of Natural Science, ... 213

NEW COLLEGE—INTERIOR OF QUADRANGLE.

PREFACE.

THROUGH the exertions of the late Dr Welsh, Professor of Church History, the sum of £21,000, in subscriptions of £1000 each by twenty-one individuals, was raised for the erection of a College in Edinburgh, in connection with the Free Church of Scotland. The foundation-stone of the building was laid by Dr Chalmers, Principal of the Institution, on the 4th of June 1846. When it became certain that the building was in such a state of forwardness as to admit of the classes for the session 1850–51 being assembled in it, a requisition, subscribed by many of the most distinguished ministers and elders of the Free Church, was addressed to the Rev. Dr Nathaniel Paterson, Glasgow, Moderator of the last General Assembly, requesting him to call an extraordinary meeting of the Commission, to consider the subject of the opening of the New College. A meeting of the Commission accordingly was held at Edinburgh, on the 10th October 1850, and was numerously attended. The following is the minute of its proceedings:—

"Dr Paterson having been called to the chair, the Commission was constituted with devotional exercises.

"The Commission approve of the conduct of the Moderator in calling this meeting, and having proceeded to consider the subject brought under their notice in the foresaid requisition, the Commission express their thankfulness, that, in the good providence of God, the Collegiate Buildings in Edinburgh, commenced upwards of four years ago, are now so far advanced towards completion, as to afford the prospect of their being in readiness for the reception of the various classes at the opening of the ensuing session; and farther, in reference thereto, the following resolutions were moved, seconded, and unanimously agreed to, viz.:—

"I. That the New College be opened on Wednesday, the 6th day of November next.

"II. That the Commission appoint the Rev. Dr Paterson, Moderator of the late General Assembly, to preside on the occasion in the Free High Church, and thereafter to address the Principal and Professors, and, in the name of the Church, to commit to their care the education and oversight of the students who may enrol themselves in the New College.

"III. That, at the close of the Moderator's address, the Principal make such an exposition of the system and of the course of study to be pursued in the New College, as may seem to him to be necessary, and as may be fitted to awaken throughout the Church a deeper and more intelligent interest in that important institution; and farther, that the Professors, on the two succeeding days, take advantage of the opportunity of setting forth, each in a public lecture, the prospects and claims of their respective departments, and the general nature of their intended course of instruction.

"IV. That arrangements be made for securing the presence and countenance of the contributors to the College Building Fund, to whose munificence the Church is indebted for the noble structure which is then to be opened; and that some one or more of their number, and other friends, be solicited to take part in the proceedings of the day.

"V. That, after setting apart sufficient accommodation for

the Professors and Students, the members of the College Committees, members of Assembly, and ministers and elders of the Church, who may be present, the remainder of the church be left open to the public.

"VI. That the acting and special Finance College Committee be authorized to take all necessary steps for giving effect to these resolutions.

"The benediction was then pronounced, and the meeting of Commission was closed.

(Signed) "Nathl. Paterson, D.D., *Modr.*
Thomas Pitcairn, *Cl. Eccl. Scot. Lib.*"

The New College was opened on the 6th November 1850, and the preceding resolutions of the Commission were carried into effect.

At the ordinary meeting of the Commission in November, the following resolution was unanimously adopted; and, in accordance therewith, the Discourse, the two Addresses, and the Eight Lectures, of which this volume is composed, are submitted to the Church and the public.

> "At Edinburgh, and within the New College Hall, No. 80 George Street, the 20th day of November, 1850 years.
>
> "Which day the Commission of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland having met, and being duly constituted, *inter alia*,
>
> "On a motion made and seconded, the Commission unanimously record their thanks to the Rev. Dr Paterson, Moderator of the late Assembly, for the discourse delivered by him at the opening of the New College, on the 6th instant, and for the highly satisfactory manner in which he fulfilled the important duties devolved upon him on that occasion: Farther,

they request him to allow his sermon and address to be published; and the Commission hereby make the same request of Principal Cunningham, in regard to his address delivered on the same day, and of the Principal and his colleagues, the remaining Professors, that they allow their opening lectures, delivered on the 7th and 8th days of this month, to appear in the same publication.

"Extracted from the Records of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, by

"THOMAS PITCAIRN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot. Lib.*"

SERMON,

DELIVERED AT THE

OPENING OF THE NEW COLLEGE.

BY NATHANIEL PATERSON, D.D.,

MODERATOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FREE CHURCH.

NOVEMBER 6, 1850.

SERMON.

"Not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."—1 Cor. i. 17.

The blessed Paul is a noble example of greatness of heart, and greatness of mind, in the service of his Lord; and never for a moment does he forget that he is entrusted with a message of infinite importance to the world. He will, therefore, not be diverted from his mighty errand by any thing that the world can give—not even by its best things—not by the treasures of its learning; and he will not suffer the words of man's wisdom to mingle with, and mar, the preaching of the cross, which is "the power of God."

Paul's greatness of heart may be seen in his generous self-denial and undaunted courage; in that fervour of love with which he followed Christ, whether through good report or through bad report; and in the entire devotedness of his life to the saving of souls, for the Lord's sake. He can never name the name of Jesus without holy adoration, and some ascription of praise which may exalt the Saviour's glory and endear his character to all men. As no perils or privations can shake the attachment with which he cleaves to the crucified Redeemer, so no ingratitude of fellow-mortals can quench the ardour of his benevolence. "He loves them more abundantly, the less he is loved."

His greatness of mind is conspicuous in all his conduct. His soul always rises superior to the exigencies of his condi-

tion, and his presence of mind never forsakes him. With trust in God, and an anchor cast in heaven, he fears no tempest of a lower world. He calmly speaks amidst the tumults of a ferocious people thirsting for his blood. He reproves the mighty; and, though a prisoner in bonds, he quails not before the face of his judge; but, by the force of truth and sincerity of mien, he makes the proud to tremble on the seat of judgment. He is not entangled by the fear of man, which bringeth a snare. He is above the world, because he does not love it. He lives only for one thing, and for that he will save his life, if there be no call to lay it down—he will appeal unto Cæsar; but, let duty call, and then "he is ready not to be bound only, but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

But, together with this greatness of heart and mind, let us see also how deeply the apostle felt that he was intrusted with a message of infinite importance to the world. He counted not his life dear unto himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. So momentous did he regard this blessed gospel, that, being himself saved by its grace, were it not that he might preach it for the salvation of others, he would rather die than live. "I have a desire to depart," he says, "and to be with Christ, which is far better: nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, wo is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." To Timothy, his son in the faith, he says—"Preach the Word; be instant in season and out of season; meditate on these things; give thyself wholly to them. Do the work of an evangelist; make full proof of thy ministry. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine. Continue in them; for in so doing, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." Surely the very energy of these, and many kindred exhortations, uttered with so much ardour of affection, together with the strong feeling of that obligation which rested on himself, do powerfully show

how unspeakably important was the gospel message in the eyes of the apostle; and, seeing ye all have souls of equal price with his, why should these glad tidings be less appreciated by any one of you? O think what that gospel is in the sight of our Lord, when he ordains that it shall be preached in all the world, for a testimony to all nations; because he would have all men to come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved! Unspeakably important to all men, inasmuch as all have sinned, and have need of salvation; "for there is none righteous, no, not one; none that seeketh after God, none that doeth good, no, not one." All have sinned; and the soul that sinneth, it shall die. Unspeakably important, then, forasmuch as that Saviour whom the gospel reveals, and freely offers, "is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, and neither is there salvation in any other." And is it not the highest of all obligations under heaven to receive, and lay to heart, this gracious message; to send it abroad, or *go* with it, that it may be preached to every creature? "For that same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. But how, then, shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" O then, what sin must lie at the door of those who will neither go nor send! They have no anxiety that others should hear the joyful sound, because they themselves see no beauty in the feet of those who bring glad tidings. But all-important is this gospel message to you all, whether ye will hear or whether ye will forbear. "For he that believeth hath everlasting life; he that believeth not is condemned already." And death is very near. "In such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh." All-important, then, by all the difference that there is between an eternity with God in heaven, and an eternity in the place of wo, where God forgetteth to be gracious, and his mercy is for ever clean gone.

With such a sense of his momentous errand to a lost world —with all his greatness of heart and mind; caring nothing for self; filled with love to God and to the souls of men— behold Paul planted at Corinth, bearing his great commission, and burning with zeal to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. Corinth was a great city, placed between two seas, and famous for trade. It was notorious for its degrading superstition and loathsome idolatries; for its wealth, and pride, and luxury, and lewdness. Nevertheless, Paul abode there a whole year and six months; and, by the blessing of God on the preaching of the cross, his labour of love, in the midst of the most unconquerable difficulties, was crowned with wonderful success. There were many converts at Corinth; and a Christian church was there established, which continued long to flourish, extending gospel light to the surrounding heathen, and gospel charity to the poor of Christ's flock in distant lands.

But no sooner was the apostle called away from this scene of his hopeful labours, than false teachers arose, who, pretending to be apostles, depreciated the character of Paul, denying that he was an apostle, and perverted the right way of the Lord. The Corinthians, notwithstanding their gross corruption of morals, affected to relish and patronize the fine arts, as well as the schools of philosophy and rhetoric. Such a people, accordingly, were mightily pleased with discourses arrayed in logical subtilties and a gorgeous eloquence, but could ill endure the simple statement of gospel truth, and the soul-humbling doctrines of the cross. As might be expected from this darkness of understanding and depravity of taste, they gave cordial welcome to the false teachers, and became the victims of their crafty and selfish aims. It is easier far to defile than to purify, to pull down than to build up; and those "deceitful workers," bent on carnal gain, although incapable of doing good, are both willing and powerful enough to destroy. They use a style of declamation suited to the prevailing fashion, and which the apostle character-

izes in our text by "the wisdom of words." They vilify the blessed Paul, who had so long and successfully laboured amongst the persecuting Jews and profligate heathens of that place; and they determine that they will have nothing to do with any doctrine, so hard to be received, as the ruin of the soul by sin, and salvation only by the cross of Christ. They are loud in the praise of moral beauty, and the demands for a moral reformation; and yet, even in regard to these, they allow a very liberal indulgence of the prevailing vices, lest, by any means, they should offend the rich, and lose their favour.

But the system of the "false brethren" goes still farther in the way of direct assault upon the most sacred doctrines of the Christian faith, and especially that to which the Saviour always appeals, as the crowning proof of his divine mission,—viz. his own resurrection from the dead; that which proves the perfection of his work, in the conquest of death and the restoration of the redeemed to their original felicity, —viz. the resurrection of the body; that which the blessed Jesus so expressly and repeatedly promises in behalf of the true believer—"I will raise him up at the last day." This consummation of the Christian's hope becomes, in the mouth of these pretended apostles, with all their "wisdom of words," the subject of ungodly ridicule, and is represented, in their flowery declamation, as a superstitious fancy and a moral impossibility. It is to them, and their wicked insinuations, that the apostle refers, when, in their own words, he puts the question, "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" and indignantly repels the imagined impossibility, by pointing to a law of nature, and of nature's God, in cases that are innumerable, and equally mysterious. "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." And what, but the reproach of folly in the extreme, can cleave to those who would limit the power of Almighty God, whilst they behold the reproduction of all that beautifies the earth, and fills the sea, as well as the diversified

glories of the heavens? And how is it a mightier effort of the Sovereign Will to raise up our frame a spiritual body, than to *create* the soul, and to form the body at first of flesh, and that from dust, and dust from nothing? But humility will never be found in connection with ungodliness, and opposition to the revealed will of God.

And now, it is easy to conceive how the spirit of the apostle must have been stirred within him, and roused to the highest pitch of moral indignation, when, by the reports of faithful brethren, he learned what the enemies of truth were doing in the church at Corinth. He sees now the fold of the Great Shepherd invaded by wolves in sheep's clothing. He sees his own apostolic honours, which he received of the Lord, and held for his glory, rudely trodden under foot; all his own work and labour of love shaken to its foundation, and the glorious treasures of gospel grace made subservient to the purposes of factious ambition and of worldly gain. And what adds enormously to this wickedness, and aggravates the sorrow of the apostle's heart, is, that all this is done in the name of the Lord Jesus, and under the pretence of authority from him. He finds, moreover, that these deceivers have been too successful, and that the success of their schemes is mainly owing to a style of speech derived from man's wisdom, and brightened into a fascinating glare by the arts of oratory and the learning of the schools. When you contemplate Paul, crucified unto the world, thirsting for souls as his hire, and giving all the glory of his ministrations to his blessed Lord; when you take into account his own thorough conviction, that no soul is saved but by the true and faithful Word, you may well understand why he detests the devices of the false teachers; why he will have nothing to do with their boasted wisdom, because "the foolishness of God," as they impiously call it, "is wiser than man;" and why he declares in our text, "that Christ sent him to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."

He further explains, in the beginning of the second chapter, what we are to understand by "the wisdom of words:" —"And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God; for I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." And again, in the fourth verse, "And my speech, and my preaching, was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power." It is, no doubt, very possible that the deep things of men's wisdom, known only to the learned, may surprise the hearers, and excite an idle wondering at the amazing depths of the preacher; but, on the one hand, how unprofitable are such exhibitions, and, on the other, what guilty trifling with immortal souls! The "excellency of speech," and the "enticing words of man's wisdom," may do much to create admiration, and draw crowds to the speaker; but they will have no tendency to bring glory to God by winning souls to Christ.

Paul disowns and rejects all such gospel ministration, not only on the ground of its unprofitableness, but because of certain unworthy accompaniments with which it cannot fail to be associated, and as Paul found to be actually the case amongst the corrupters of his day. But altogether irrespective of those historical personages, may it not, most surely, be inferred, that if there were a real love to souls, a just appreciation of man's necessities, and of God's goodness in the remedial provisions of the gospel, there could be no such thing as the preferring of worldly emolument and personal renown, to the immortal interests of our fellow-creatures. There would neither be the presumptuous sin of corrupting, by human inventions, that holy Word which God has magnified above all his name, nor the presumptuous folly of imagining that any thing human can be a help to that which Infinite Wisdom has perfected for the salvation of lost man.

And here let us observe, that it is not the modest and beneficial art of *illustrating* divine truth that the apostle con-

demns, but the base and sinister device of excluding, in gospel application, what might offend, or surreptitiously admitting what might please, the carnal mind;—thus adopting a scheme that does not make God's Word the rule of faith, neither declares the whole counsel of God, nor rightly divides the Word of life. In respect to the illustration of divine truth, the whole case is entirely different. The learned Paul, though he objects, as we have seen, to the "wisdom of words," is no enemy to learning. Gifted with pre-eminent talents, and these improved by much study, he was, humanly speaking, one of the most powerful, eloquent, and accomplished of men. He never says a word against any natural endowment, or any of those mental qualifications which industry or genius may acquire. Nor do we hesitate to affirm, that every branch of true science,—every achievement of useful art,—every attainable depth of discovery in the immensity of God's glorious handiworks, may be lawfully, and ought to be diligently sought, in order to be seasonably employed in throwing the brightest reflection of Nature's light on the pages of inspiration. All truth is one, and truth has no conflicting parts; and how often, when we encounter in the written Word things that are hard to be received, have we found it a relief to our minds to refer to the volume of providence, and there perceive that God is in many instances actually doing according to what he has spoken in the book of his revealed will. The more, therefore, that we can learn from every legitimate source, the more fit are we both to pray and to praise "with the spirit, and with the understanding also." "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." Papists have always been opposed to the freeness of light; and in our day, Romanizing teachers, of meaner soul, "wondering after the beast," begin to discountenance the acquisitions of science; not surely for the sake of divine truth, but probably, and not unaptly judging, that they may wield a mightier sceptre amidst the weakness of ignorance and the fears of superstition, than ever can be compatible with

liberal knowledge and the diffusion of vernacular Bibles, together with the exercise of the heaven-taught duty, and the heaven-imparted right, of private judgment. And what a monstrous iniquity it is, that those who are themselves enlightened, as if weary of God's goodness and the blessings long showered on this nation, should, for the sake of priestly dominion, oppose the freedom of truth, and seek to prostrate an enlightened people at the feet of Antichrist, to the dishonour of the Father of Lights, and the advancement of the powers of darkness.

To such contraband religionists, and their promotion of ignorance, there is nothing in our text to give the smallest countenance: Paul has no sympathy with them. He is against the darkening of the Word; not against the enlightening of the mind, for the better perusal of that Word. He is in nowise adverse to all the enlargement of the mental powers which the most bountiful seminaries and the most diligent study can afford. But if, in the handling of the life-giving Word, there be either a profane glitter to attract the eye to the creature, and divert it from the source of saving light; or the adulteration of the heavenly wisdom with that which is earthly; or the suppression of some essential truth, without which the Word cannot be saving; then, no wonder that the apostle is indignant, and levels a sweeping blow at that wisdom of man, which runs counter to the wisdom of God, and "would make the cross of Christ of none effect."

So was it long after the apostle's day, when, as history tells us, the maxims of the Greek philosophy were so mingled with the gospel, as to corrupt its beautiful simplicity, and neutralize its glorious power,—setting the heralds of the cross at variance, and causing the trumpet to give an uncertain sound. And, as an instance of the far-seeing of our text, we find the wisdom of words fraught with the like evils in our own land, and in more modern times. When, during half a century of dark Moderatism, in the preaching of the gospel there was indeed the naming of the Sun of Righteousness, but almost a

total eclipse of his beams. Sin original, or even sin actual, to the extent of ruin and deserved wrath, as the great fact of man's condition, was rarely or but faintly uttered; whilst the death of Christ was not declared to be necessary as an atoning sacrifice; but still it had a place, and was not a little prized, as an affecting example. And in harmony with such premises, it was held that men could do a great deal, and doing well what they could, any deficiency that might arise, in the matter of their justification, would be compensated by casting some portion of the Saviour's merits into the ascending scale. Thus a quieting system of administration prevailed, in perfect accordance with worldliness of spirit, provided there was decency of character; and it was thought by some, that a nice problem had been solved, when it could be shown how well the preaching of the gospel might be conformed to the modern philosophy. This was no faint shadow of ancient Greece, and of that "wisdom of words" which the blessed apostle was constrained by divine authority to abjure,—"Christ sent me to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."

But how shall we adequately speak of that glorious cross, which the world is ever laying schemes to keep out of the way? It is the most wonderful of all the manifestations of God's ways that has appeared on earth; it has no parallel and no resemblance under heaven. Deaths, in every form, are familiar to us: all men die; but "death is the wages of sin," and "death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Sinners put an end to their own life, but in so doing they are either bereft of reason, or abandoned to him that has the power of death. Men murder their fellow-mortals, but in this they derive their crime from him who is "the father of lies, and a murderer from the beginning." "Death reigneth;" and no mode of its triumph needs be any surprise to a world lying in wickedness. But here comes God's holy child Jesus, "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." He knew no sin: "he is holy,

harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." His whole heart is love to God and love to man, and in all his days he went about doing good. He declared that he was the Son of God—that he and his Father were one, and a divine power attested the truth of his word, while he did those things that no man could do, except God were with him. Add to all this, that a voice from heaven again and again proclaimed, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." How astonishing that one so holy, and so dear to the Father, should die, and by a death so rare and terrible, that it required the concurrence of wonderful providences to render it possible that he should meet a death so cursed. The Jewish law had no cross—the Roman had; and the sceptre must depart from Judah, and the Romans rule, before the ignominious cross could be erected for Jesus. That cross is an amazing spectacle. There is no other person in the universe like the Son of God. He has taken our nature, and therefore he can die. He is infinitely dear to the Father, and, meek and lowly in his sufferings, he says, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But "it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." Certainly this was a righteous man —the holiest of beings, and yet the greatest of sufferers, and the only explanation is, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

Here, then, is a sight that may well stagger a guilty world, and cause the most careless sinner to think what his condition is. Jesus, the Son of God, took our nature, and as he undertook our ransom, he must suffer in our room and stead. Behold, then, his cross—his agony of spirit—his lingering and painful death. Behold that cross, loaded with its holy and harmless victim, and your soul is stricken with God's awful demonstration to the world of the sacredness of his law, and the infinite evil of sin. So hateful is that sin in God's sight, that when the holy Jesus takes it upon himself, that he may bear it away from us, his spirit is agonized on account of the divine wrath; and in the solitude of dereliction, he

exclaims, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" At this sight, how strong is the conviction, that if any thing less than the blood of God's dear Son might have served for a sin-offering, one so glorious in holiness, and so beloved of the Father, could not have suffered such things. And now, what sin under all heaven can so offend a just and gracious God as that of making the cross of Christ of none effect? Looking to that cross, let the sinner say with his own soul, Am I able to stand before a righteous and sin-hating God, to endure that wrath which caused the holy Jesus to suffer agony, and his sweat, like great drops of blood, to fall down to the ground? If God spared not his own Son, who loved and served him, will he spare me, a rebel against his law, with a mind that is enmity to himself? Will he spare me if I refuse the offered mercy, and die in my sins, counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and making the cross of Christ of none effect?

O sinner, if the terrible demonstration of God's wrath against thy sin will not overawe thee to repentance, look again to the cross of Christ, and see there a token of God's love, and of his unwillingness that thy precious soul should die. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." But it is not the gift only that betokens all the love; it is the gift associated with all that God's dear Son must suffer for our sake. For the Word says, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up"—that is, on his cross in Calvary—"that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Now, what an amazing proof of God's love to a lost world is thus vividly displayed in the cross of our Redeemer! And hence, all that you have seen before of God's awful demonstration of the evil of sin by the sufferings of the cross, comes now to magnify his love to lost sinners, whilst, by these same means, he manifests his unmitigated hatred of their sins. He looks to that cross, and says, "Why will ye die,

O house of Israel?" Touch, then, the golden sceptre that is stretched out; and, for the sake of eternal life, and its immortal crown, beware lest you despise God's marvellous love, and put the highest contempt on his unspeakable gift, by making the cross of Christ of none effect.

But there is more than the Father's love manifested in that cross. There is brotherhood in it—a kindness that is melting. He that was equal in power and glory with the Father, stoops down to us in the seed of Abraham—"bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh." The Redeemer pities us, seeing we are helpless and lost; he endures for us what we could not endure, and dies for us, that we might live together with him. He is bruised for our iniquities, and suffers, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. He was rich, and for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. He despised the shame of his cross, because by it he would glorify his Father, and save his brethren. In that shameful thing he beholds a greatness that is above all the glory of those heavenly orbs that were "created by him, and for him," because it will shine when they are in darkness; and in it he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. Over against its shame he sets the splendour of its consequences, and leaves those who love and admire it to lament, with himself, the malice and blindness of Jews, to whom it is a stumbling-block, and the foolish pride of the Greeks, to whom it is foolishness. Surely its ignominy weighed but little with him, when, shortly before he suffered, he instituted its blessed memorial, saying, "This is my body, broken for you, this do in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." Humbled, yet saved, his people will view the shame as he did, and grateful for the pledge of his dying love, their language to the end of time will be, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ." And what, then, shall be said of those who so preach or so hear the gospel of Christ, as to make of none effect that cross,

which is the token of his love and of his power to save? How shall they hope to share in its triumphs, and unite with the Redeemer in that song of grateful and everlasting praise, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

But, further, let us consider for a moment the conspicuous place which the cross of Christ bears in the whole system of revealed truth. It is shadowed forth, or plainly unfolded, from the beginning to the end of the inspired volume. It is signified in the first promise of grace—by the bruise which "the seed of the woman" should suffer. It is indicated in all the types, and ceremonies, and sacrifices of the law; "for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin." Christ recognised his cross in the brazen serpent, as also in the Paschal lamb, roast with fire, and eaten with bitter herbs. "Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us." To him, and to his cross, gave all the prophets witness, when they testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." To make the cross of Christ, then, of none effect, is to make the Bible of none effect. With it, the whole Word is full of light; without it, all is dark—as if the sun were extinguished amidst the planets. Without the cross of Christ, there is no consistency —no bond of union—in the several parts of revealed truth. There is nothing to humble the sinner—nothing to exalt the Saviour—nothing to glorify the justice and the truth, as well as the mercy of God. It is in Christ crucified—in his law, magnifying righteousness, and atoning death—that God is reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses; and it is in this way that he is the just God and the Saviour of them that believe in Jesus. Being justi-

fied by faith, they have peace with God; and it is that peace which the Saviour hath made by the blood of his cross.

But, though justified by faith and filled with peace, you are yet in an enemy's country; and therefore we would say, Look once more to the blessed Jesus, and his all-glorious cross, that you may see the way of conquest over all his and all your spiritual foes. Behold him "spoiling principalities and powers, and making a show of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross." It was because he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. All his and our enemies are thus, by reason of his meritorious death, placed in subjection under him. It is thus that he robbed death of its sting, and the grave of its victory; and it was by believing views of the Saviour's cross that Paul was crucified unto the world, and the world unto him. It was through death that the blessed Jesus destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. And it is just because of these triumphs that all the powers of darkness, and all men who are yet in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity, do ever hate the cross of Christ above all things on earth. And hence, they will keep it out of view; or they will call it foolishness; or, in deeper enmity, will make a god of it, and convert to an instrument of sin that by which the Saviour suffered for sin, and through which he is mighty to save.

Oh! brethren, there is instant and terrible danger to your souls, if either you neglect that salvation which is by the cross of Christ, or look for any other. Christ is set forth evidently crucified among you; not only in the preaching of his Word, but in the symbols of his broken body and shed blood. And yet, does not our Lord behold, and the church bewail, the extent to which his cross is still made of none effect? How

many are yet living in sin, impenitent and unbelieving! What multitudes in all our great cities are wholly estranged from the house of prayer, and content to live and die like the heathen! To all such, the cross of Christ is obviously made of none effect. When will the church of the living God be roused to a sense of her duty in regard to those perishing souls? O that more of Christ's people were so filled with his Spirit, that they might find it their *rest* to go into the streets and lanes of the city, and compel the careless to come in! Again, there are some who profess to believe the Bible, but deny the Saviour's divinity; and view his death, not as an atonement for sin, but only as an example of virtuous suffering. But of how little value is the mere profession of belief? In this case, with the exception of some moral precepts, the whole substance, and use, and end of the gospel revelation is disbelieved; and by all such, the cross of Christ, as to all the glory and power of its import, is certainly made of none effect. We are constrained, also, to affirm nearly the same thing of those who, perhaps with less of wilful blindness, are following the tendency natural to all men, "going about to establish their own righteousness, and not submitting themselves unto the righteousness of God." They toil much against the stream, and many of them very sincerely, to come at a more perfect obedience; but all the while their labour is utterly vain, so long as they seek to be justified by the deeds of the law; and, until they look to "Christ as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," not only will they be strangers to peace, but incur an increase of guilt, by making his glorious cross of none effect.

We do most earnestly and affectionately beseech all such to consider what it is that they are madly opposing or neglecting, and to consider what their end must be. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, where-

with he was sanctified, an unholy thing; and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord." And again, "The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." But now is the appointed time; now is the day of your merciful visitation. "Come unto me," says the blessed Jesus; "him that cometh, I will in nowise cast out." The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, even from yours—your tremendous sin of hitherto making his cross of none effect.

But what, after all we have said, is able to change your heart, and bring you to repent of all sin; and especially that of despising the cross? None but the Spirit of God can savingly teach, and lead sin-darkened souls to know their own sin, and the power of Christ and his cross to save. None else can effectually call, and persuade, and enable sinners to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as all their salvation and all their desire. And now, that that great blessing from on high, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, may be yours—that you may know how to ask, and how to receive it—we invite you once more, and lastly, to look to the cross of Christ, that you may behold one other of its crowning glories in the virtue that procured for the church of God an abundant outpouring of the enlightening, and sanctifying, and comforting grace of the Almighty Spirit. You remember the Word that says, "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified;" and then you know how and why he was glorified—because of his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, he was highly exalted; that thus he ascended to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was; and "when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God"—the Holy Spirit—"might dwell among them." The disciples saw their Lord ascend; but, to the eye of sense, he was soon lost in the clouds. The eye of their faith followed him to the throne of his glory; and,

waiting for the "promise of the Father," their faith was rewarded, at the appointed time, by such an outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the preaching of Christ's word, and especially his crucifixion, that the hearers were pricked in their hearts, and there were added unto the church about three thousand souls that same day. All this, we say, was the Saviour's purchase—the effect of his risen glory—and that glory the result of his ignominious cross.

And now, dear brethren, surely nothing has since intervened to diminish that glory, or limit "the promise of the Father." "Ask and ye shall receive." "If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." When the Spirit is come, he shall convince the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment. "He shall glorify me," says our Lord, "for he shall take of mine, and show it unto you." Let me admonish you, then, never to ask the question, Whether you can pray without the Spirit? but rather fear lest you grieve the Holy Spirit of God; for if, in any measure, you are convinced of your sin and danger, what know you how much the Spirit hath already done? Wherefore, quench not the Spirit, but earnestly looking to Jesus and his cross, pray without ceasing, that by the grace and power of his Spirit, you may be one with him by a living faith, and "live with him by the power of God." Such prayer will not be in vain. Being much grieved for your sin that has crucified the Saviour, and seeing his ineffable love in shedding his blood for your ransom, you will flee to him for refuge; and looking back on the snares and delusions you have escaped, and forward also, in the hope of dwelling for ever in the presence of God and of the Lamb, surely you will glory in him who hath given peace to your soul, by the shedding of his blood, and glory in his cross, by which you shall gain the immortal crown.

And now, in conclusion, let me observe, it is this peace with God—this love to Jesus, and rejoicing in him, that con-

stitute the foundation of brotherly love and true benevolence to all men. Your friendships are all sweetened by the assurance of a deathless union with one another, and with the same Lord; and when you contemplate the Saviour's love, as proved by his cross, your hearts are pained for the perishing heathen. You love them for the Lord's sake, and why should they die? You will do what you can to bring them to Christ; and nothing will so delight your soul, as to behold the cross every where triumphant. You greatly rejoice that the Saviour, once crucified, is now so exalted, and his grace so free. "All things are put under his feet;" no enemy can resist his sceptre of righteousness; and from his mediatorial throne, in the plenitude of power, he proclaims the all-gracious command—"Look unto me and be ye saved, all ends of the earth." "Unto him shall the gathering of the nations be;" and when they come, then will be seen, in all the world, the true glory of that heaven-honoured and earth-despised cross of the blessed Jesus, according to his own word—"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

OPENING OF THE NEW COLLEGE

BY NATHANIEL PATERSON, D.D.,

MODERATOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FREE CHURCH.

NOVEMBER 6, 1850.

ADDRESS.

Very Rev. Principal, Rev. and Learned Professors of this College,—The duties which devolve upon me on this solemn occasion now require that I address a few words to you. To this I am called by the unanimous resolution which the Commission of the General Assembly recently adopted at a *pro re nata* meeting, held in reference to the opening of the New College. It is under the shield of that authority, that I find courage to speak; and for the same cause, I confidently trust, you will find patience to hear; seeing that the authority just named is that to which you do all, as well as myself, most respectfully bow. Besides, it is, no doubt, *comely*—it ought always to be *salutary*—it may sometimes be *requisite*—that the voice of the Church should be heard in the highest of her schools.

We entertain no good hope either of school or college that is dissevered from the church. In the utterance of such a sentiment, we would not be thought to arrogate any thing to ourselves. We ground our suspicion on what we read in the Word, and see in the providence of God. He that says, "Feed my sheep," says also, in the same breath, and in the same love, "Feed my lambs." And when there has been no such sacred influence brought to bear on the seminaries of learning, we have frequently seen how little the masters cared for the "godly upbringing of the young." And so far are we from any shade of clerical arrogancy in this matter, that we do as unhesitatingly affirm, that we have no hope of the

church herself, except through that promised grace, by which, when it is sought, imparted, and improved, she becomes "the ground and pillar of the truth;" a witness for it; and the means of extending the knowledge, and the love, and the power of it amongst all her people. This, and this only, can make her an instrument for good, whether in regard to children, or the youths in training for the holy ministry. We may well be humbled when we behold what monstrous solecisms graceless churches are. Humanly constituted—humanly directed and upheld, how often, though professing to be of Christ, have they become so opposed to his truth, that the Head of the Church has been provoked to remove the candlestick from its place; and in so doing, has probably deemed it a lesser judgment to leave the land to its natural darkness, than allow to the powers of darkness a mightier dominion through means of a perverted gospel. And how often have churches been long suffered in a state so dead and corrupted, that, for all gracious purposes, their overthrow would seem a lighter dispensation than their longer continuance? Surely such providential warnings serve to show the infinite need there is of humble dependence on the divine Spirit,—of steadfast looking to Christ, and adherence to his truth,—of watching unto prayer against the inroad of error, or the decline of godly zeal, and of faithful resistance to the introduction of any of those corrupting elements,—such as lordly titles, earthly priesthood, lay-patronages, or Erastian supremacy,—all, or any of which, or such like human inventions, will be sure to destroy the efficiency of the blessed gospel,—to quench the Spirit, and provoke the Lord to withhold the light of his countenance.

And surely such sense of danger, and of the necessity of watching, comes to be greatly enhanced by the consideration, that when it goes well with the church, then is she in a condition to exert a salutary influence on the educational institutions within her pale; but if it be ill with her, then her efforts go to reproduce her own likeness, and perpetuate

those very errors and corruptions which she is divinely appointed to reprove and put away. Why, then, if God has given her grace to stand well as a church, and if the intrusion of any bad element carry consequences that are fatal, were it not criminal on her part to neglect those seminary processes on which she cannot but know that the character of her future ministry in a great measure depends. And who can estimate the evil that may come in that way? If we are sensitive to our own dangers, and view the church as a ship whose sides are in the midst of an element that is ever seeking, by every chink, to enter with a deadly power, are we to believe that colleges are so well built that they have nothing to fear, or we nothing to fear for them? God forbid! The best thing that we can wish for their safety and ours is, that they should not be viewed apart from the church at all, but be, in fact, part and parcel of it. Then will they fear as we do, and be ready to guard along with us. But if, at any time, they should be otherwise minded—then, seeing as we do, that God has given such promises to his church, as he has not given to any body apart from it, and seeing that he has given us, in these times, such measure of grace as should strengthen our obligations, and raise our souls to him in grateful adoration, let it be now our deliberate wisdom to resolve, that one of the worst evils that could threaten the church's prosperity would be the dissociation of her educational institutions from her paternal vigilance, and from her responsible control. Responsible she is to the Lord, her great Shepherd, her Lawgiver and King; and let her learn from him with what tender care to regard the lambs of his fold; and learn also, from the same source, what is a nearer concern—a weightier obligation—to maintain a watchful superintendence over "the schools of the prophets."

What so vital to the wellbeing of the flock of God, as the godly training and the spiritual fitness of those who are afterwards to feed them—of those who will soon be all that this church will have for dispensing the ordinances of that

grace which bringeth salvation! How important that such ministers should be men of God—men of faith—men of prayer—filled with the Spirit, and nourished up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine—workmen that need not be ashamed—apt to teach, and wise in winning souls! If such must be the men that the cause of Christ requires, then what must their instructors be? By all that is to be hoped for in a rising generation of ministers, the church is bound to look after the hearts and ways of those to whom interests unspeakable and immortal are intrusted. The church may not divest herself of this care, because, being a corporate body having a succession of generations, she is answerable for what is necessarily laid upon her, in reference to that succession; and because colleges, however excellent they may at any time be, are not to be left to their natural tendencies. Ambition, mere human ambition, might produce its candidates for any chair. Intellectual qualifications may be raised to the highest pitch, whilst the spiritual, little regarded by many, is very low. Literary and philosophical ardour may be glowing and bright, whilst the heart, towards Christ and his gospel, is cold and dark. In such hands, prelections, when they border on the things of revealed wisdom, are often observed to make a pause and turn away with a polite apology. In other cases, the sacred ground is looked at with a sneer; but, let the natural enmity to God be only roused a little more, by some allusion, it may be, to *saints*, or *martyrs*, or *spiritual independence*, and then instantly the ordinary restraints of decency are broken down, and the shafts of malignant sarcasm are levelled at the holiest things of the Christian faith.

Such woful exhibitions have been and will be again, if such vast interests are left to the course of this world. And oh, it were a sight to make angels weep, to see a rising generation of ministers, or others who, by the help of learning, may come to hold influential positions in society, instead of being plied with the lessons of heaven's love, and heaven's

wisdom, and gained over to a godly zeal for the cause of righteousness and truth, cruelly exposed in the very halls of light, and, by their "alma mater," to those darkening, and chilling, and poisoning influences, which blight their manhood, unfit them for any good, harden their hearts against God and his life-giving Word; and all the while, the main ambition of the worthless guardianship is to gratify itself by no higher aim than that of exalting its victims to the chair of the scorner! The erection of such a building, accessible to such an agency, were a source, not of joy but of mourning, and could only resemble that of Hiel, the impious Bethelite, who proceeded to rebuild the city which God had doomed, and who, according to the curse foretold, "laid the foundations in the death of his first-born, and set up the gates in that of his youngest son."

Wherefore it is, that, seeing such importance of design, in regard to the noble structure that is here completed, and such need of precaution as to ultimate results, it does seem fit, and essentially requisite, that there should be laid at its very foundation some such sentiments as, with all humility and fervent desire for the prosperity of both church and college, I have ventured to express. It seems proper that such sentiments should not only be uttered on this solemn occasion, but be felt, and responded to, and remembered by this great and memorable assembly, as some type and omen of the future good we hope for, and as a testimony of our dependence on God for his blessing on this all-important institution. And, "though in weakness, and fear, and much trembling," I have been called in the providence of God to represent the church of our fathers, and thus address you, it is my great comfort to believe that the relation in which I thus stand is one that will always be mutually endearing; and to know that the duty I seek to discharge, is agreeable to your expressed desire; whilst it is my happiness to trust that I have uttered nothing respecting the use and end of this noble institution, or the good to be derived from it, but what is in perfect ac-

cordance with the heart and mind of its Very Reverend Principal, and of all its Reverend and Learned Professors.

And now, my very dear and much-honoured brethren in the Lord, I give thanks to God on your behalf; rejoicing that the opening of this college, which has been erected for the permanent good of our beloved Zion, should have so fair a beginning as it has, under the professorial care of diligent and devoted men, the very choicest of our day—men of eminent talents and signal accomplishments—sound in the faith, prudent, and kindly-affectioned—at once able and worthy, as we are persuaded, to take the fatherly oversight of that most interesting portion of the community committed to your trust—to be by you edified in that knowledge which may fit them for high places, and in that "godliness which hath promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." We claim credit for higher aims than worldly compliments when we look to paramount interests, and give thanks to God for the auspicious opening of an institution that respects a present and a future world.

And, now regarding the work you have in hand, I cannot but heartily congratulate you on this noble edifice. There is no species of handiwork, and none of fine art, that is at all comparable to that of rearing the youthful mind—rendering it instinct with knowledge—improving the affections, refining the taste, rousing and directing the energies of the mental powers—and, more especially, when the use and ends contemplated are the highest on earth; and as the labour is important, so no labour, in any department, has more need of all the advantages which bountiful space and a sufficient diversity of compartments can afford. Delighting in your deliverance from previous straits, and seeing the good hand of God in this spacious structure, I am constrained, when I consider health, comfort, and the success of your heavenward labours, to render thanks and praise to the Giver of all good, whilst I cordially offer my congratulations to you.

As this building, like the stamp of a coin, will characterize

its age, so this day will be memorable in the annals of our country. The New College stands associated with 700 Free Churches, built in seven years, and with nearly as many Schools in connection with these churches. Historians, according to the complexion of their minds, will variously task themselves to account for these unparalleled results. In the mean time, the meeting this day recalls the judgment of the church of our fathers, as then it might indeed be called, when during the ten years' conflict (so admirably portrayed by her own historian), she, by large and increasing majorities, determined to maintain at all hazards those principles which concerned the freedom of Christ's people, and the honour of their Redeemer's crown—the same for which our forefathers shed their blood, and who, by adding "to the faith virtue," subdued the tyranny of persecutors, and reformed the law, leaving us, without the sacrifice of life, the lighter task of defending the same cause with only the sacrifice of substance. Thus, we say, that church, which was the church of our fathers, gave her sanction to what we have since done in building all these churches and schools, and, I may add, to what we are doing this day; for there can be no sense in having one set of principles for a church and another for school or college. And it is well that we include in our definition of a church, not ministers only, but elders and people, who believe in the same Lord; for it is by the religious convictions of the many—and these not the wealthiest in the land—that so great abundance of gold and silver has been poured into the treasury of the Free Church in so short a time; and that a few, who for the Lord's sake, devising liberal things, have, with unexampled generosity, and without prejudice to the other funds of the church, reared this princely edifice, and conferred a precious boon on our times. And not on our times only; for from these steadfast and enduring towers, a ray of light is darted far into the dim futurity, by which we descry the generations that shall be born, sending forth their sons to learn within these walls, how, in accordance

with the whole counsel of God, they may preach the unsearchable riches of Christ; and attracted thither, not by the antiquity of the venerable pile, but the antiquity of those principles which caused its creation—which have their strength in the everlasting gospel, and, amidst the world's changes, their stability in "a kingdom which hath foundations that cannot be moved."

If such be the hope of all present, as we sincerely believe it to be, then let all unite in giving thanks to God for this hope; praying that by his good providence, and the grace of his Holy Spirit, the result may be according to our ardent expectations; that this institution, on account of which we are assembled, may be blessed to us and to our children; may be instrumental to the promotion of useful learning, the rearing of a pious and learned, an able, faithful, and efficient ministry of the blessed gospel; through whom good may come to the Israel of God, and to our beloved land; in whom, and in the fruit of whose labours, the blessed Jesus may "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

With such aspirations from the heart, and in the view of your solemn and important charge, I need not say, beloved brethren and fellow-workers in the Lord, how deeply I sympathize with you in what I know to be your own sense of the responsibility that now lies upon you. Though entering upon your labours in this new arena, the sphere of your labour is not new. You have come into your present position by a large concurrence of your brethren in the church, and have made, for a considerable period, full proof of your faithfulness and ability; and it has on all hands been frequently acknowledged, and not unfrequently in reference to you, how wonderfully God has provided the fittest persons for needful places, in the exigencies of our Zion; and I am sure you do now command, as you have done, in times past, the high approbation of your constituents, the love and veneration of your students, and, to an extent as far as is compatible with man's diversified ways, and your safety, the esteem and

confidence of the church, and of the public at large. And sure I am, that amongst all who are most concerned, and amongst whom your labours and success are best known, you are "esteemed very highly in love for your work's sake." But, with all due appreciation of past services, I am constrained to urge the infinite importance of the work you have in hand; and to observe, that God sets no limits either to ministerial or professorial usefulness, because he sets no limits to the grace of his Spirit; and you can never say that you have done all that you could, because you cannot say what the grace of God might enable you to do. Every year there are some passing away from your hands, and then there is no more that you can do for them; but when they are gone, and you think of the work of God to which they are called, there may remain to you the question, Whether you have done for them all that you could? A new session is now about to begin, and if any reflection be found to arise from opportunities that are past, O let me, with an eye to the kingdom of God, and to the day of reckoning, earnestly entreat you to carry such reflections into the field now before you, as a reinforcement to every motive hitherto felt, and to every resolution hitherto formed.

Bereavements plead as I have done. You naturally recall the heavy losses which have been inflicted on your infant college. The event of this day brings them so vividly before us, that it seems as if the blow had newly fallen on our hearts. We cannot but think how these illustrious founders of the New College would have smiled to see this crowning of their expectations which we are here celebrating. I have not the vanity to imagine, that any words of mine could do justice to so much departed genius and Christian worth. Besides, it were folly to attempt, by panegyric, to add to a world-wide fame; and equally vain, to seek an increase of those tender affections, in which the deceased will be held in remembrance long after our days are all numbered, and we are all gone. That ancient process of embalming had its use while temporal

things held higher sway, and bodies might be kept to represent the claims of an earthly inheritance. Kept they were, after a way; but foul to look upon. Ours, through grace, is an art more sweet and subtle. It preserves amongst us, not only the mortal body, but the living soul. The same Spirit that renewed our dear friends in the likeness of God, before they left us, made us love what we saw, and well remember what we loved. They still live before us, as they were wont to do. We see their shape and countenance as when we used to meet them with gladness; we are still affected by their looks, and are melted with the words of their lips. There is no need of myrrh, and aloes, and sweet spices for them. "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." We give thanks to God because he gave them; and because the good they were privileged to do, can never be lost. It will long be to the credit of this college that it possessed the honour of such names; and surely ye, their successors, will strive, in the Lord's strength, to make these heavy bereavements fall as light as you can on the beloved church of your fathers, and on those dear youths committed to your charge. We commend to all, the language of resignation—"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord;" and to you, the practical and blessed admonition—"Whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."

In reference to your solemn charge, my beloved brethren, suffer an earnest, heart-felt word, in conclusion. Whilst I would speak and pray for the heartiest encouragement, I would not have you feel that your charge is light. Yet, let it never weigh down your spirits; but rather let it bend your knees at a throne of grace, that you may bear it on your spirits before God; and He who has promised that, "As your day is, so shall your strength be," has also invited you to cast your burden on him, and he will sustain you. Think often of the amount of power, for good or ill, that is lodged in those youthful minds around you, and what that power

will be, when they are dispersed over the land, and have entered on their various careers. It is not your prerogative to wield it: it belongs to them, and they will soon be removed from your control. But now it is your part, through the grace of our Lord, to give it a safe and useful direction; to correct its erring bias, and, with salutary force, to determine it to its proper end. That you may have such mighty influence over these youthful minds, let me entreat you to be watchful over your own spirits, as all good through you to the souls of the young must come from God; and the supply of that channel will depend on your nearness to him. Such of you as have been in the holy ministry, may have cause to fear lest a coldness to Christ and his salvation should come over your hearts in these academic halls, while your exercises are more of an intellectual, and less of a spiritual nature. I have heard, with great delight, that the illustrious Chalmers was wont, in his latter years, to keep on his list a few names of the sick and the afflicted, whom he would visit as time permitted, for their soul's sake, and for his own good, by the exercise of ministerial communion with God, and nearer views of eternity. I am not urging the example in that particular, but quoting it, as exhibiting the felt necessities of that great Christian. And it is in reference to these necessities that I humbly crave to admonish you, being sure that your care of your youthful charge will be in proportion to the liveliness of your own concern for eternal life; and the more you strive to "keep yourselves in the love of God," and to be guided by his counsel, the more will ye, in the business of instruction, resemble the Great Shepherd of the sheep, "who fed them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands."

Let the youths be well told, at a period when their experience is little, and trials few, and conceit runs high, that that last named thing is vile and odious, that it must not be seen in their conversation, that it must not pollute their literature, that it must not go with them into the pulpit: let

them study good sense, which will be ashamed of it; let them get solid learning, which will dethrone it; let them be true philosophers, and they will seek to be humble—true Christians, and they will "learn of Him who was meek and lowly in heart." And oh, let it be not only under the parental roof, or not only in the house of prayer, but let it be to the credit of this college, that all who come within these walls have heard here, and heard from all their teachers, some of the first things that concern them as immortal beings —"that they must be born again," that, "except they be converted, and become as little children, they shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." If such instructions be accompanied with the teaching of God—and why doubt that they will?—and if these youths be early won to Christ, his redeemed, his converted ones, then, O think, dear friends, in your noble calling what a pleasant work you would have of it! —how honoured of God! how successful in the work given you to do! You would send forth more labourers of a right heart and mind for the Lord's vineyard, whether at home or abroad; and what is true, but commonly less expected, you would, through the same renewing of the heart, raise up an order of young men, distinguished not only by gracious dispositions, but by higher intellectual attainments. Youths so impressed will make more conscience of study, of redeeming the time, and of honest fitness for the duties of their calling. As they love God, they will seek out the works of God, because they have pleasure in them. Vanity is repressed, and taste refined, by the loved perusal of holy writ; reason is strengthened, by comparing the ways of God in nature and grace, in judgment and mercy; whilst memory is enlarged, by the endearing treasures it has to recount; and the imagination is at once chastened and elevated, by regarding the depths of perdition from which the soul is delivered, and by the sublimest contemplations of the Saviour's glory, and of an eternal world. With all this, we desiderate, for our beloved youths, all that literature and science, that philo-

sophy, and the various departments of theology, can do. We rejoice, on behalf of our students, that they are committed, in the providence of God, to your hands; and our hope is, that you will not only maintain your high reputation, but strive to out-do what you have hitherto done, and that, keeping the front rank in the progress of the age, you will prove an example and a stimulus to kindred institutions; all which may the Lord enable you to do, and all which you will do, if, giving all diligence, and trusting in the grace that is all-sufficient, you constantly seek, for all your charge, the higher end of winning their souls to Christ; for then you have a phalanx of strength. All true interests conspire—none of them conflict; and these three combine for your encouragement:—your highest satisfaction in these beloved youths, their greatest good, and the joy that shall be in the presence of angels.

Praying that the Lord may bless and prosper you all, in all your work and labour of love, I do now, in the name of the Free Church, commit to your care the education and oversight of the students who may enrol themselves in the New College.

And now, my dear young friends, students of the Free Church, you have heard what I have been permitted to say to your excellent professors, and as your interests are essentially blended with theirs, there is no need that I should say much to you. Besides, I owe an apology to this assembly for having occupied its time so long. You have a loud call of thankfulness to God for your present opportunities, under masters as deservedly dear as they are distinguished, in every department of your college. Give them all respect, and love, and obedience. You have to answer to God for your time, and talents, and opportunities of improvement. Give all diligence to your studies, for your own sakes, and for the comfort of those who love you, and labour for your good. Beware of idleness, which, once begun, creeps over the soul like a canker, renders study distasteful, and the grashopper

a burden. Strength, vigour, and happiness increase by virtuous application. Strive to excel: it is not small attainments that will do for these times. The enemies of truth are learned; and you must neither fear them, nor meet them with inferior weapons. If you are looking forward to the church, seek the right spirit of your calling, and get a verse or two of the Bible by heart every day. Nothing that is so easy to be done will ever do you as much good. You are —many of you, at least—far from the paternal roof. Be much in prayer for yourselves, and for a blessing on those who are praying much for you; also, for your dear professors, that their labours for you may be crowned with the divine blessing; and for one another, that you may be strong as a band of brothers, and prove a comfort to each other in all the journey of your life. "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified."

ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

OPENING OF THE NEW COLLEGE.

BY WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM, D.D.,
PRINCIPAL.

NOVEMBER 6, 1850.

ADDRESS.

THE circumstances in which we are this day assembled, might naturally suggest to us a considerable variety of interesting subjects of contemplation. They might lead our thoughts back to the memorable era of the Disruption, when we felt ourselves constrained, for conscience' sake, to abandon all connection with the ecclesiastical Establishment of this country, and to undertake for ourselves the execution of the whole duties and functions of a Church of Christ, including, of course, the preparation and training of candidates for the ministry, depending only upon the blessing of God and the liberality of those who conscientiously adhered to our principles and our cause. It would have been not unsuitable to this occasion to have given a brief exposition of the grounds on which we felt ourselves constrained to take that important step, and on which we still feel ourselves called upon to uphold our principles, and to make provision for perpetuating and diffusing them. With the grounds of our separation from the State and from the ecclesiastical Establishment, with the principles embodied in the distinctive testimony of the Free Church, and with the leading transactions to which the maintenance of these principles gave occasion, all candidates for the ministry in our church ought to be familiar. It would have been not unsuitable, upon this occasion, to have dwelt upon these topics; but I have thought it preferable, upon the whole, to choose a different subject; and, in regard to *this* matter, I will content myself at present with urging those of you who

are preparing for the ministry in the Free Church, to see that you make yourselves familiar with it, and to remind you that you have an opportunity of becoming fully acquainted both with the arguments and the facts of our case, by studying my friend Dr R. Buchanan's "History of the Ten Years' Conflict"—a work in every respect worthy of the subject of which it treats, and of the occasion by which it was produced.

We might very naturally, upon this occasion, turn our thoughts to the resolution adopted by the Free Church, to make provision for the professional training of candidates for the ministry, of a fuller and more ample kind than had been previously attempted by any of the unendowed churches of Scotland; and of the leading steps taken for carrying this resolution into effect—such as, maintaining a considerable staff of theological Professors, whose whole time may be devoted to the duties of their office as teachers of theology, and to the cultivation of theological literature; the establishment of several cognate classes on subjects which are not directly theological, but which the aspect of the times seemed to indicate that it was desirable to have taught to students of theology, and taught by men in whose character and principles the church had perfect confidence; and, lastly, the erection of a building for the theological seminary so constituted, corresponding to the magnitude of the object aimed at, and the general standing of the Free Church in the community,—forming, as it now does, a splendid memorial of the munificent liberality of the contributors, and entitling them to the lasting gratitude of the church. We might dwell perhaps, without impropriety, upon what may still be necessary in order to maintain this institution on a permanently efficient footing—an object not very likely to be effected if the support of it shall be left to depend wholly upon annual collections and contributions. We might venture to set forth something of the claims which this institution, and those engaged in conducting its business, may reasonably advance to the sympathy, the good wishes, the assistance, and the prayers of

the church in general; and we might do this without claiming any thing like worth or merit to ourselves, simply upon the ground that, in the actual condition of things, the qualifications of the future ministers of the Free Church, and, of course, important spiritual interests, do, in fact, to some extent depend, under God, upon the efficiency of this institution, and upon the manner in which our duties are discharged.

Some of these topics have been already adverted to with great beauty and propriety in the admirable address to which we have listened, in regard to which I am confident that I express the mind of my colleagues, as well as my own, when I say that we give a hearty response to the views and sentiments which it expresses, that we deeply feel our need of the admonitions and exhortations which it embodies, and that we sincerely desire to profit by them. Upon some of the topics referred to, I will only further say, that the professors are deeply impressed with a grateful sense of all the kindness which the church has manifested towards them, and of the obligations they owe to the generous contributors to the erection of this college; that they do feel, in some measure, the high responsibility attaching to them; and that they earnestly desire and entreat that they may ever have the benefit of the prayers of the members and congregations of the church, for grace and strength to discharge aright their duties, and for God's blessing upon their labours.

I am afraid to refer again to a topic which has been treated upon in the Moderator's address in a peculiarly solemn and impressive manner; but it is impossible, upon such an occasion as this, to abstain from turning our mournful and reverential regards to those dispensations of God's providence which removed from the midst of us the two distinguished men, who, abandoning at the Disruption their position in the university of this city, established, and may be said to have constituted, this theological seminary—men who were fitted to shed the highest lustre over any institution, and who, by the combination of their contrasted gifts and graces, were

peculiarly qualified to exert a most powerful and wholesome influence upon the minds of students of theology. To Dr Welsh we are chiefly indebted, under God, for the erection of this building; and no sooner had his zealous and unwearied efforts in calling forth the munificent liberality of the contributors been crowned with complete success, than he was called to rest from his labours, and to enter upon his reward. Dr Chalmers, as Principal of this institution, laid the foundation of the building on the 4th of June 1846; and, on the same day of the succeeding year, he was consigned to the tomb, amid the heartfelt lamentations of the community and of all the churches of Christ. I have had opportunities, on former occasions, to direct the attention of some of you to these dispensations, and to the distinguished men of whom they bereaved us, to indicate some of the aspects in which these matters ought to be contemplated, and the feelings which the contemplation of them ought to call forth; and I will not now enlarge upon these topics, but will only say, on the part of my colleagues and myself, that the remembrance of these men, pressed upon us by the circumstances in which we are this day assembled, does deepen upon our minds a sense of our responsibility, and does impress upon us the necessity of strenuous exertion in the discharge of our duties; while, at the same time, I may take the liberty of suggesting, that the irreparable loss which this institution has sustained in the removal of these men, should give it a strong claim upon the sympathy and kindness of the church.

Dismissing, with this brief notice, these various subjects, which might not unsuitably have occupied our attention at this time, I have thought it, upon the whole, more becoming and appropriate to bring before you the leading features of what has been done or attempted in the arrangements of our theological curriculum, and of what seems still necessary in order to make it really efficient, and, in some measure, adequately adapted to the necessities and demands of the age.

And here, in the first place, let me remind you of what is

the direct primary object of a theological seminary and a theological curriculum. It is to secure that those who pass through it shall possess, in a respectable measure, the mental qualifications which are thought necessary in order to entering upon the office of the ministry. This is the great leading object for which theological seminaries are established, by a regard to which their arrangements ought to be regulated, and for the accomplishment of which they may be fairly held responsible. God forbid that I should undervalue the importance of the spiritual qualifications for the office of the ministry. I have repeatedly, on occasions similar to this, endeavoured to enforce, as plainly and earnestly as I could, the sinfulness of men entering upon the ministry, unless they are animated by genuine piety and devotedness, and influenced by love to the Lord Jesus Christ and desire of saving souls, and the sinfulness of the church committing the ministry to any but those who, so far as man can judge, are at least believing men, and apt to teach (πιστοι and διδακτικοι). But there is nothing inconsistent with this in the position, that the implantation of genuine piety in men's hearts is not the direct, proper object for which theological seminaries were established, and for the accomplishment of which they are responsible. That object is, as we have said, to secure that all students shall acquire a respectable measure of the mental qualifications thought necessary, in the particular age and country, for the ministry of the gospel. There are, indeed, collateral objects of no small importance, which may be promoted by the arrangements of a theological curriculum; and especially by the general spirit in which these arrangements are conducted. And the first and most important of these collateral objects—for it may be said to be collateral in this particular aspect, with reference to the direct and proper object of a theological seminary, though in itself, and with reference to a wider standard of judgment, it is transcendently important—is that of originating and fostering personal piety in the hearts of the students; and to

this object it is all the more important to have special and constant regard, because, in point of fact, it seems to have been no uncommon thing amongst us, in times past, for young men to be first awakened to a deep sense of divine and eternal realities, while they were engaged in the prosecution of their theological studies. Again, a theological curriculum may be so arranged and conducted as—while effecting fully its proper primary object of producing a respectable measure of professional acquirements in the students in general—to call forth such an aptitude, and such a love, for professional study as will effect that *some* of them, who may be favoured by a combination of the necessary abilities and of propitious external circumstances, shall reach distinguished eminence, and make valuable additions to professional literature. And finally, with reference to these collateral objects, the exercises of a theological seminary may be conducted in such a way as may be fitted to foster in the students a manly and elevated, honourable and generous tone of sentiment and of feeling, and enlarged sympathy with every thing that is excellent, lovely, and of good report, the want of which sometimes tends to bring discredit even upon what there is good reason to regard as genuine piety. All these collateral objects may be promoted and fostered in a theological seminary, and I trust they will not be neglected in this one; but I must repeat, that the direct primary object of a theological seminary, and a theological curriculum, that by a regard to which its arrangements ought to be mainly regulated, and for the accomplishment of which it may be held responsible, is to effect, that the students shall all acquire a respectable measure of those qualifications for the ministry, which may be tested and ascertained by examination.

Under this general head, the more specific objects to which the arrangements of a theological curriculum should be directed, may be said to be these three: 1*st*, and more generally, The communication of that amount of professional know-

ledge which would make it becoming and safe to sanction young men entering upon the work of the ministry, and the want of which would be discreditable, and injurious to their professional respectability; and more particularly, 2*d*, Initiating the students into the critical and accurate investigation of the meaning of the sacred Scriptures, in the original languages, upon sound principles, and conducting them over a considerable portion of the inspired volume; and, 3*d*, Instructing them in the general scheme and leading features of scriptural doctrine and revealed truth, in accordance, of course, with the symbolical books of the particular church with which the theological seminary is connected. These are the leading objects, by a regard to which the arrangements of a theological curriculum ought to be regulated.

It might naturally be expected that the Free Church, being called upon to establish a theological seminary, and to arrange a theological curriculum for herself, without obstruction or interference from any parties, would take advantage of the light of experience for improving the system of theological education which had hitherto obtained in the Scottish universities, for rendering it more complete, vigorous, and efficient, and adapting it more fully to the necessities and demands of the age; and this expectation has been, to some extent, though as yet not fully, realized. The leading defects of the system of theological education, as it obtained in the Scottish universities previous to the Disruption, were these three: 1*st*, That there was no adequate provision for ascertaining that students, before they were allowed to enter the divinity hall and to commence their theological studies, possessed respectable acquirements in literature and philosophy; 2*d*, That the subjects of systematic theology and church history were assigned to one professor each, who usually provided a course of prelections which extended over three or four sessions, so that students entering the hall had to commence their studies with the first, second, third, or fourth years of a systematic or a chronological course of pre-

lections, according to the place in the cycle which the professor happened at the time to have reached; and the 3*d* and most important defect of all was, That there was no distinct, adequate, provision for initiating students into the critical study of the sacred Scriptures in the original languages, and conducting them through an accurate investigation of a considerable portion of the inspired volume. To the second of these defects, we are now able, in this seminary, to apply an adequate remedy, but the first and third still attach, in some measure, to our arrangements.

The only provision subsisting among us for securing that young men are respectably qualified in literature and philosophy, before they are allowed to enter the divinity hall, is an examination by any one of the seventy presbyteries of the church. The nature of the case, and the testimony of experience, prove this provision to be utterly inadequate; and there can be no reasonable doubt, that the proper remedy is an examination of all applicants for admission to the study of theology, by a board of examiners, who shall be appointed for the purpose, and who shall have full power to send back to their studies those who are deficient in preliminary qualifications—a remedy which, I hope and trust, will soon be brought into operation. With reference to this topic, I think it right to express my confident conviction, that the average standard of qualifications in literature and philosophy possessed by the students who are admitted to the study of theology in this seminary, is superior to that which obtained in the divinity halls of the Scottish universities, before and at the Disruption; but I think it right to say also, that the presbyteries still send up to us some young men to be instructed in theology, who, from the deficiencies of their acquirements, are unable to profit adequately, if at all, by a course of theological study; and who ought to have been sent back to the classes of the Faculty of Arts, that they might acquire a greater amount of mental training, and a larger share of classical and philosophical knowledge.

The defects of the system, whereby one professor had to go over the whole of systematic theology in a course of four years, the students, as they entered the hall, commencing their studies at whatever period in the four-years' course the professor happened at the time to have reached, early attracted the notice of Dr Chalmers. From the time when he entered upon his office as Professor of Theology in the University of Edinburgh, he deplored and exposed this defect, and sought to remedy it. He was unable, however, to effect this in any measure, until he found himself at the head of the Theological Seminary of the Free Church. Then the first step was taken towards this object, by the appointment of a second professor, to divide with Dr Chalmers the wide field of systematic theology; and the effect of this has been, that ever since, the defects of the system have been so far remedied, that all students, on entering the divinity hall, have had a course of instruction provided for them suitable to the first year of their theological studies. The defectiveness of our accommodation, which prevented the professors from having two classes at different hours, the repeated breaches made by death amongst us, and a vacancy of two years in one of the chairs, have hitherto made it impossible for us to carry our plans in this department into full effect. Now, however, for the first time, by the two professors taking each two classes every day, and having the students of only one year attending each class at a time, complete provision will be made for conducting the students over a regular course of systematic theology during a curriculum of four years, so that all students, as they enter the hall, will begin at the beginning, and be guided in regular order and in systematic connection over the leading departments of the whole scheme of Christian theology. During the first year, the students will be occupied in this department with those subjects which used to be discussed in the old systems of theology, under the heads, De theologia, De principio theologiæ, De sacra scriptura, but which,

in modern continental systems, are usually explained under the head of prolegomena or praecognoscenda, or are ranked under the general title of apologetic theology, comprehending natural theology, the evidences of Christianity, the divine origin and authority of the books of Scripture, inspiration, the canon, and the rule of faith. During the second and third years of their curriculum, they will be occupied with the investigation of those great doctrines of Scripture which bear more immediately upon the ruin and recovery of mankind, the condition and fate of men individually, or the whole of what is usually included under the word *doctrine*, when it is taken in its more limited sense, as distinguished from worship, government, and discipline. And then, in the fourth and last year of this course of systematic theology, their attention will be directed to what Scripture teaches concerning the church or kingdom of Christ, its nature, constitution, government, and ordinances, including, of course, the ministry and the sacraments; in short, the topics discussed in the fourth book of Calvin's Institutes, and in the third volume of Turretine's System. This last department of Christian theology, which possesses peculiar interest and importance in the present day, Dr Chalmers, from the unwieldy magnitude of the subject assigned to him, of which he often complained, was unable to include in his public prelections; and it will this session be, for the first time, fully and formally expounded to our students, though the doing this, in addition to his other labours, will impose an oppressive amount of hard work upon my colleague, Dr Bannerman, who is called upon to grapple with it. By adopting a similar arrangement in regard to the class of church history—that is, by limiting the course to two years, and by taking each day two classes, the one attended by students in the second, and the other by students in the third year of their curriculum—all students will be conducted in regular order over the outlines of the history of the church, and will have submitted to them a

SCO THEOL

course of prelections upon historical and polemic theology, a survey of the history of the most important theological controversies, which will supplement the systematic departments of the curriculum, and leave more time and leisure to the two other professors to open up the whole scheme of Christian theology from the sacred Scriptures.

Thus far our arrangements are complete, and I have no doubt they will work beneficially for the interests of the church. But I have said, that one leading object to which the arrangements of a theological seminary and a theological curriculum should be directed, is to initiate the students into the critical study of the sacred Scriptures in the original languages, and that the want of any distinct and adequate provision for effecting this, constituted one great defect in the system of theological education which has long obtained in the Scottish universities. There seems to have been a just appreciation of the importance of this object in the older schemes of Scottish theological education, in the time of Andrew Melville, and at the period of what we commonly call the Second Reformation. But there can be no reasonable doubt, that for the last century and a half it has been grievously neglected amongst us; and I certainly cannot say that the Free Church has yet made provision for this department of theological education, proportioned to its importance and value. It is true, indeed, that a systematic exposition of the scheme of Christian theology implies, if rightly conducted, a frequent reference to Scripture, and an investigation of the exact meaning of its statements, for its object is just to educe from Scripture that system of doctrine which rests upon the authority of God in his Word; and many of you are aware that my colleague, Dr Buchanan, has included, in his course of instruction in systematic theology for second and third-year students, a full exposition of the doctrinal part of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. But it is not possible, in a course of systematic theology, to give to the subject of the literature

and exegesis of the Old and New Testaments, the amount of time and attention to which it is entitled. There is a large amount of information connected with the history and literature of the books of Scripture, of which it is discreditable for ministers of the gospel to be ignorant, and which it should be seen that they acquire during the course of their theological studies. The general principles and rules of hermeneutics should be explained, and copiously illustrated and applied, in actual exegesis; and students should in this way be conducted, in the course of their theological studies, over a considerable portion of the inspired volume, just as it stands—as God has given it to us. To this amount of time and attention, the subject of the literature and exegesis of the books of Scripture is undoubtedly entitled, in any well-regulated course of theological education; and it is eminently discreditable to the churches of Christ, that in times past so little care has been taken to secure, that those whom they sent forth commissioned to become the instructors of others in Christian theology, should have been so superficially and imperfectly acquainted with the inspired Word of God; that so few of their ministers should have been qualified to open up and establish the exact meaning of the statements of Scripture in an intelligent and business-like way—that is, with a full possession of the necessary materials for attaining and defending accurate results, and with ready skill in the right application of these materials—in short, with a competent acquaintance with the science and the art of Scriptural interpretation. At all times, and in all circumstances, it should be an object of primary importance, in any scheme of theological education, to secure that ministers of the gospel should possess an enlarged critical acquaintance with the sacred Scriptures in the original languages, and this object is specially and peculiarly important in the present day. It is impossible, we think, to look abroad upon the present aspect of theological literature, without being persuaded that it holds pre-

eminently true in these times in which our lot is cast, that the great questions, as to what the Scriptures are, what purposes they are fitted and intended to serve, how they should be used so as best to serve these purposes, and what it is they require us to believe, must be fought upon the field of Scripture itself, must be decided by an examination of the actual text of the Hebrew and Greek originals; and that, in the investigation of these questions upon this ground, the defenders of the truth must be prepared to encounter men who, while perverting the meaning of Scripture, or even denying altogether its divine origin and authority, are yet intimately acquainted with the letter of the Bible in the original languages, and thoroughly versant in the whole critical apparatus. And then it should not be forgotten, that there are many strong temptations to withhold or withdraw men from the prosecution of the exact and critical investigation of the meaning of Scripture, and that there is little likelihood of ministers *in general* continuing to give some share of time and attention to this difficult work during the remainder of their lives, unless, during their theological studies, the necessary preliminary knowledge has been acquired, the initial difficulties have been removed, and habits have been formed which will render the continued prosecution of this department of study easy and delightful.

I cannot deal longer upon this subject, but I must take the liberty of repeating what I have said before concerning it, and endeavoured to press upon the consideration of the church, viz. that a theological curriculum must be regarded as at all times, and especially in the present day, radically defective, *unless* it contain full and adequate provision for initiating students, by practice and example, as well as by precept, into the right mode of critically studying the sacred Scriptures, unless it conduct them over a considerable portion of the inspired volume in the original, and unless it leave them at the end of their theological course with such a capacity, and such a

taste, for the critical study of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, as shall make it probable, or rather certain, that they shall continue all their days to study them, and to grow in the accurate knowledge of them. If this position be true, and its truth, I think, will not be disputed, then it ought to be acted on. The Free Church has not yet fully recognised this duty, or made adequate provision for accomplishing this object; but the College Committee have endeavoured to make arrangements for affording to the students as full opportunities of acquiring a familiarity with the critical study of the Scriptures as circumstances allowed. The right and only adequate provision for securing this object would be—1*st*, That students should possess a competent knowledge of the Hebrew, as well as of the Greek language, before they are allowed to enter the divinity hall; and, 2*d*, That a well-digested and orderly-consecutive course of instruction in the literature and exegesis of the Old and New Testaments should be carried through the whole four years of the theological curriculum, running parallel to the four years of instruction in systematic theology formerly described; and to do this fully, in accordance with the general principle of providing for all our students suitable instruction in each year of the curriculum, adapted to the stage of their progress, would require that we had two professors of exegetical, as well as two of systematic, theology.

I am well aware that there are great practical difficulties in the way of securing to our candidates for the ministry a full and complete course of professional education—difficulties which perhaps it is unreasonable to expect to see entirely removed. These difficulties ultimately resolve into this, that the circumstances of many of our students prevent them from devoting their time for three or four years principally to theological study, while yet this seems to be almost indispensable to a complete theological education, adapted to the necessities and demands of the present age. Indeed, if I were asked to describe generally

a complete scheme of theological education, I would say that it was a provision or system of arrangements whereby young men, after suitable preliminary preparations in the study of literature and philosophy, devoted their time for three or four years principally to theological study, upon a systematic, well-digested plan, under intelligent guidance and superintendence, with full access to books, and in circumstances, and with accompaniments, fitted to stimulate, to encourage, and to test them. This is what ought to be aimed at, and, in so far as it is not reached, we ought, at least, to be aware that we are coming short of what is desirable. The experience of the last century and a half in the Scottish universities seems to show, that there are strong tendencies in operation amongst us, which lead men, in place of boldly facing and trying to overcome the practical difficulties in the way of realizing a complete provision for a satisfactory theological education, to succumb to them tamely and contentedly, and to acquiesce in indefinite encroachments upon every thing which reason and experience suggest as indispensable to an efficient system. In these circumstances, when we are far from having reached a complete and perfect system, when there are serious difficulties in the way of our even approximating to it, and when experience shows that men are so apt to yield to these difficulties, and, under their influence, to curtail and impair arrangements already very defective, it is surely not to be wondered at, if those who are more immediately called upon to watch over this matter, should be jealous of any thing that may have even the appearance of tending in the direction of lowering the standard of theological education, and should be solicitous to press upon the church the propriety of thoroughly securing for all our students what we have, and of aiming at more. Some may think our fears and apprehensions groundless, and our expectations and demands extravagant. But one thing, I venture to say, is certain, that whatever efforts may be made to elevate

the standard of theological education, and however sincerely the church in general may desire to effect this object, the standard will always continue to be, in point of fact, abundantly defective. There are causes and influences which will always prevent us from even approximating to perfection in this matter; and it is well that the church should realize this, and seek to preserve that general state of mind and feeling which the realization of it is fitted to produce—not as if a mere generality of this sort were of itself sufficient to determine any practical question that might be raised about theological education, but simply as presenting *one* element for consideration, which is perhaps too apt to be overlooked.

It is unnecessary for me to say one word on the general subject of the importance of maintaining a high standard of theological education—as high a standard as our condition and circumstances will admit of. On this point we are all agreed, and in aiming at this object, we will all, I have no doubt, cordially co-operate. Perhaps, however, I may take the liberty, in conclusion, of reminding you, that the respectability and influence of the Free Church in the community, and thereby her fitness, in some measure, for effecting even the highest objects of a church of Christ, will become every year more and more dependent, under God, upon the character and qualifications of her ministry. The Free Church has been placed in very peculiar circumstances. She has received much forbearance and kindness at God's hand. She has still most abundant ground to thank him and to take courage, with reference to the opportunities of usefulness he has vouchsafed to her, and the ability, and, to some extent, the willingness, he has given her to improve them. She has had, indeed, some formidable difficulties to contend with; but she has also had, and perhaps in still larger measure, some important adventitious advantages to assist her in prosecuting her schemes and in executing her plans—advantages, indeed, in which the di-

vine goodness is to be recognised, and which ought to be carefully improved for the furtherance of Christ's cause, but which are liable to be abused while they last, and which, according to the ordinary principles of God's providential government, cannot be expected to last long. Truth, indeed, like its Author, is eternal and unchangeable; and having been brought into our present position, as we believe, by the honest maintenance of a portion of God's truth, we are warranted, while we continue to adhere to that truth, to expect the divine blessing upon our labours. But we cannot reasonably expect some of the adventitious advantages we have hitherto enjoyed as a church to be long continued to us, and we must look mainly, under God, to the character and qualifications of our ministers for our permanent usefulness and respectability. It holds true universally of every profession or class of men in society, that their permanent efficiency and influence depend mainly upon strength and steadiness of principle, diligence and fidelity in the discharge of duty, and a high standard of professional skill and ability. And, with all that is peculiar—fundamentally peculiar—in the office of gospel ministers, with reference to its appropriate objects and ends, this general principle applies also to them. Their permanent influence and respectability in the community, and thereby, in some measure, the probability of their success in the great object they profess to aim at, depend upon their exhibiting, in combination with that diligent and unwearied discharge of the duties of their calling, which can result only from the operation of genuine piety and devotedness to God, a high standard of professional ability and acquirements. And, upon this ground, let me again commend this institution, and every thing that may affect its welfare and efficiency, to your kindness and to your prayers. Let me again assure you, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, of our sincere gratitude for all the confidence and kindness with which we have been treated by our brethren in the ministry, and by the church in general—of our earnest desire

that the church may always continue to watch carefully and strictly over the proceedings of this institution—and of our determination, by God's grace, to do all we can, under something like a right sense of our responsibility to God and to the church, to train up a race of men who will be in all respects "able ministers of the New Testament," who will "do the whole work of evangelists," who will "hold fast the faithful word as they have been taught, that they may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."—(Tit. i. 9.)

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

ON

CHURCH HISTORY.

BY WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM, D.D.,

PRINCIPAL, AND PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY AND CHURCH HISTORY,
NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.

NOVEMBER 7, 1850.

CHURCH HISTORY.

We have now the prospect of being able to carry out, to a considerable extent, some of the changes, and, as we believe, improvements, which we have long desired to introduce into our arrangements for theological education; and, on this account, it has been reckoned expedient that each professor should give an introductory lecture, explanatory of the general character and objects of the particular department assigned to him in the curriculum, and of the arrangements to be adopted for conducting its business. The professors now will have two classes each day, which has hitherto been impossible from the want of accommodation. The effect of this in the departments of Logic and Moral Philosophy, where we have usually the students of only a single year under our care, and where, of course, the two hours a-day are devoted to the same students, will be, that a combination of the benefits of the professorial and the tutorial systems of instruction will be, to some extent, realized, and that these classes will become, to a much greater extent than it was possible they could be hitherto, the means, not merely of communicating a large amount of knowledge in these departments of science, but also of training the students to the full use, the most efficient exercise, of their mental powers, and forming them to habits of inestimable value, as bearing upon their whole future intellectual progress. The effects of this change in

the theological department, in which the laws of the church prescribe a curriculum of four sessions, will be, that in each of its sections the students of each year will have suitable instruction provided for them, corresponding to the particular stage of their progress, and will thus be conducted over the wide field of theological study in regular order, and upon systematic arrangements. The General Assembly has, most wisely, made compulsory upon all our theological students attendance for one session upon the class of Natural Science, but has not limited their attendance to one particular year in the curriculum. Of course, all fourth-year students who have not previously attended this class, must attend it this session, while it is recommended that, in general, you should take it in the first year of your theological studies. Our scheme, indeed, will not be complete until provision be made for securing that students shall have acquired a knowledge of the elements of the Hebrew language before they enter the divinity hall, so as to admit of their attention being directed to the critical study of the Old as well as of the New Testament from the commencement of their theological curriculum, and until the church shall render compulsory an attendance upon a four-years' course of exegetical, as well as of systematic, theology. There is good reason to hope that next General Assembly will require a knowledge of the elements of Hebrew as a qualification for entering the hall; and, in anticipation of this, we have resolved to make an experiment during the present session, by giving an opportunity to the students of philosophy to acquire a knowledge of the language of the Old Testament. With this view, we have secured the services, as Hebrew tutor, of the Rev. Theodore Meyer, in whose character, talents, and acquirements, we have the fullest confidence. He will open a class in the college for Hebrew; and I would strongly urge students of philosophy, who may have it in contemplation to enter the hall in the course of the next two years, to take advantage of this opportunity, in order that, at the commencement of their theological cur-

riculum, they may be qualified to enter upon the critical study of the Old Testament. Until provision is made for students acquiring a knowledge of Hebrew before they enter the hall, the duties of the Professor of Hebrew must remain very much what they have hitherto been; but, when this obstacle is removed, he will be able to conduct them to a much higher measure of attainment in the literature and exegesis of the Old Testament. The church has not yet made any compulsory provision for formal and distinct exegetical study in the curriculum, beyond requiring two years' attendance upon a professor, who has to devote one of these years to teaching the elements of Hebrew. But, in the prelections of Dr Black, you have excellent opportunities of acquiring an acquaintance with this important department of theological study, especially in so far as respects the literature and interpretation of the New Testament. Arrangements have been made for having two classes in this department, a junior and a senior, with the view of introducing into it a greater extent and variety of subjects, and making it more generally useful and interesting. These arrangements have been adapted chiefly to the convenience of third and fourth-year's students; and it is confidently hoped, that all those of you who have reached this period of your studies, will be ready to embrace and improve the opportunities which are thus placed within your reach.

The adoption of a general fee for the course in the theological classes, instead of a separate fee to each professor, does not impose any additional pecuniary burden upon the theological students—the sum exacted in this way being just equal upon the whole curriculum to what was exigible under the former arrangements; while the students enjoy the benefit of attending the classes of Dr Fleming and Dr Black, the first being compulsory, and the second not, in addition to the classes for which formerly fees were exacted. This regulation about a common fee does not apply to students attending the classes of Logic and Moral Philosophy, nor to those

who may wish to attend any of the theological classes, without being enrolled as professional students. Students of theology from the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, will, for the present, have the option, either of paying the general fee, or of paying a separate fee for each class which they may choose to attend; but with this understanding, that, if they prefer paying the general fee, they will be expected to attend the classes according to the order and arrangements of the prescribed curriculum. We have not yet, indeed, even for our own regular theological students, laws authoritatively prescribing for the whole curriculum the particular classes which they must attend in each session. But the course which has been marked out for the four sessions is evidently the best and most useful which they can adopt in existing circumstances; the arrangement about a general fee, instead of a separate fee for each class, removes any motive or inducement which might otherwise have led them to deviate from it; and the hours have been so arranged, of necessity, as to make an adherence to the prescribed curriculum practically compulsory, by making it difficult, if not impossible, to attend in a subsequent year the classes that might have been omitted at the appointed time. I must therefore warn all our regular students of theology against omitting, in the earlier years of their curriculum, any of the prescribed classes, lest they should find that, in order to make up afterwards for the omission, they are under the necessity of attending an additional session.

Having made these preliminary intimations, which concern, more or less, the students as a whole, I proceed to advert more particularly to my own immediate department. This is usually known by the name of Church History, but, as I have hitherto treated it, and mean to continue to treat it, it might, with more propriety, be designated Historical and Polemic Theology, as distinguished from, and supplementary to, Systematic Theology.

The church, taken in its widest and most comprehensive

sense, and understood in a popular acceptation, is descriptive of the worshippers of the true God among fallen men, and of the societies or combinations in which they have been embodied. The history of the church thus extends back to the time when man, by sin, fell from the image and friendship of God, and when God began to carry into effect his gracious purpose of mercy, in calling out from among mankind a peculiar people to serve him, and in preparing them on earth for the everlasting enjoyment of his presence in heaven. It comprehends the history of the whole of those dealings of God with mankind which bear most immediately upon his great object of delivering men from their estate of sin and misery, and bringing them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer, of the provisions which he has made for securing this object, and of the way and manner in which these provisions have, in point of fact, operated. The history of the church thus embraces a very wide and extensive field, presenting a vast variety of important and interesting subjects of contemplation. The history of the church for above 4000 years, from the commencement of the immediate and supernatural revelations which God has made to men, has been written under divine inspiration, and is contained in the books of the Old Testament. And it is of itself a very striking and impressive testimony to the importance and value of history, that God himself has written the history of his church for so long a period, and that so large a portion of the whole written revelation which he has given to men should be historical, should consist of a narrative of his dealings with them. With the history of the church of God before the manifestation of his Son in the flesh, as contained in the books of the Old Testament, you ought, of course, to be familiar, upon other and higher grounds than because it is an important part of the history of the church, and especially, because it forms a portion of the inspired revelation by which God has been pleased to make known to men his own character and purposes, the way of salvation, and the

path of duty. We do not mean, however, in conducting the business of the class, to occupy your time with this department of the subject, but to confine our attention to the history of the Christian church, more strictly so called, or of the society established by the Son of God on earth, and possessing the full and completed revelation of his will; our chief object being, to make the history of the church subservient to the purpose of assisting you to form clear and definite conceptions of the real meaning and import of the revelation which God has given us, and of the best mode of explaining, illustrating, and defending the truths which it unfolds. With this view, and, as it is necessary to make a selection among the vast variety of subjects which the history of the church embraces, the more formal lectures of the course will be restricted almost wholly to the history of theology, properly so called—that is, of the doctrines taught in Scripture, or professedly deduced from it, and of the discussions to which they have given rise—or what is now generally treated by continental writers as a distinct department, under the head of dogmatic history, or the history of dogmas; and, even under this head, our attention will be chiefly confined to a survey of those subjects of discussion, which still continue to divide the opinions of men and churches.

You are not, indeed, to imagine, that any thing in the history of the church—any thing connected with the establishment, the extension, and the fortunes of that spiritual kingdom which the God of heaven has set up on earth for the manifestation of his own glory, and the accomplishment of his purposes in the salvation of the souls of men, is unworthy of your attention. The whole history of the church, even in its details, is full of interest, fitted to illustrate important Scriptural principles, and to impress valuable practical lessons. And even were it less interesting and useful than it is, it would still be matter of necessity and obligation on the part of all ministers of the gospel to be well acquainted with it. As it would be discreditable to any man of liberal education, and

injurious to his reputation and usefulness, to be ignorant of the history of the world, and especially of his own country, so it is at least equally discreditable and injurious to a minister of the gospel to be ignorant of the history of the church. But while it is your duty to acquire a full and accurate knowledge of the whole history of the church, and while it will be part of my duty to see that this knowledge is acquired, and to assist you in the acquisition of it, I have not thought it necessary to write out and to lay before you another abstract of this subject. The drawing up of a mere summary of the facts in the history of the church about which there is a general agreement, would be a useless labour, especially when so many summaries of church history, of various sizes and merits, are easily accessible. To discuss in detail even the more important questions of fact, in the history of the church, which have been made matter of controversial investigation, would take up a great deal too much of your time; and the attempt, were it made, would exhibit little else than a meagre compend of what is spread over the works of many voluminous writers on ecclesiastical history.

While, therefore, I shall endeavour to stimulate and assist you to acquire as full and accurate a knowledge of ecclesiastical history as your circumstances and opportunities may admit of, I confine the more formal lectures to a survey of the history of theology and of theological discussions, and shall attempt to apply this in the way of guiding you to correct views of the doctrines which God has revealed in his Word, and of the functions of the church, and the duties of its ministers, as they are laid down in the sacred Scriptures. The great object to which the course of your whole studies in this seminary must be directed, is to lead you to form correct and intelligent views of the doctrines revealed in God's Word. To this, the critical study of the Scriptures themselves, the systematic exposition of their contents, and the study of the history of the church, should be all directed; and in the mass of matters comprehended in ecclesiastical history, it is only the history of theo-

logy and of theological discussions that can be said to bear upon this most important object. The bearing, indeed, even of this most important and difficult department of church history, upon the formation of correct theological views, may be said to be only indirect; for it must never be forgotten that the Word of God is the only standard by which our theological opinions should be regulated, and it does not come within my province to enter into detailed expositions of the meaning of Scriptural statements, or to deduce from them the system of Christian theology. But it is manifest, that a history of the discussions which have taken place as to the truth of doctrines and the meaning of Scripture, of the way and manner in which particular opinions have been advocated, and of the practical and lasting results of the discussions, after the din of controversy has ceased, and the smoke of the fight has cleared away, may afford some useful assistance in forming a right estimate of the truth, and more especially of the value and importance of the points which may have been subjected to investigation; and this position we hope to be able to illustrate, in some of its more important practical applications.

Besides, we have no intention of confining ourselves to a *merely* historical treatment of the theological discussions which have agitated and influenced the church. It is our intention to attempt to survey them with the lamp of divine truth in our hands, to bring them into comparison with the light of God's Word, and to endeavour to guide you to a right estimate of the accordance or discordance between the views which have been broached at different times, and have gained currency and influence, and the unerring standard of the Word of God. This, indeed, lies beyond the sphere of what is usually denominated dogmatic history, or the history of dogmas, by German and other continental writers. They have cultivated this department of ecclesiastical history with far greater zeal and patience, and have manifested a much more exact, extensive, and systematic research into every thing connected with it, than any

other class of writers; but they have in general confined themselves, under this head, to a rigid historical investigation of the mere matter of fact as to what were the views really entertained by the different persons who have taken a prominent part in theological discussions, while any attempt to bring either historical or Scriptural materials to bear upon the determination of the question of what was truth and what was error, they usually exclude, and not unfrequently denounce, under the name of polemics, regarding it, apparently, as having a tendency to corrupt the truth and certainty of history. A learned German writer, who has made some very valuable contributions to the history of the church, as well as to other departments of theological literature, has thus defined the history of dogmas:—"Historia dogmatum est ea historiæ ecclesiasticæ pars, quæ nobis dictitat quid de unoquoque dogmate Christiano, in quovis seculo, et a quavis ecclesia, et ab unoquoque Scriptore Christiano, creditum usque ad nostra tempora fuerit. Non autem dici potest quam nobile, quam præstans, quam necessarium, quam utile, quam vastum, sit hoc historiæ dogmaticæ studium."—(Pfaff's Introductio in Historiam Theologiae Literarium, lib. iv., sec. iv., tom. iii., pp. 184, 185.) The study, as thus described, is certainly vast enough, and is by no means destitute of interest and utility. But he who is really anxious to make up his mind upon theological questions, to get clear and intelligent views of divine truth and its relations and bearings, can scarcely regard men who prosecute the study of dogmatic history in this way, and who confine their research within the limits thus defined, as any thing better than hewers of wood and drawers of water, whose labours are indeed useful and important in their sphere, but who occupy a very humble place in the erection of a well-founded, well-digested theology. A polemic spirit is sinful, and to be carefully guarded against, in so far as it is inconsistent with the royal law of love; and controversial discussion is at all times attended with some danger, as it often leads men to be guilty of violations of the laws of justice and candour, and tempts them

to miscontrue or pervert the statements of Scripture and the facts of history. But it must not be forgotten, that in regard to most, though not all, of the controversies which have agitated the church and influenced the progress of opinion, there was a right and a wrong side, even when neither party in the controversy may perhaps have been wholly right or wholly wrong, and that an investigation into the precise opinions which may, in point of fact, have been held and advocated by the different parties, is really important and valuable only in so far as it affords materials which may furnish some assistance in estimating aright the truth, the importance, and the relative bearings of the opinions that may have been broached.

One topic which some writers upon dogmatic history have laboured with great care, is to attempt to explain the origin of the peculiar theological opinions which particular individuals and classes of men may have been led to adopt, by tracing them to features in their natural character, or in the external circumstances in which they have been placed, or in the mental processes through which they have passed, and the influences to which they have been subjected. This is a perfectly legitimate, an interesting and useful subject of investigation, and, when successfully prosecuted, may afford important practical lessons, fitted to guard men against the sources and occasions of error. It is not often, however, that any very definite or satisfactory materials bearing upon such questions can be obtained, and many of the attempts of this sort, though displaying much ingenuity of thought, and thus furnishing a very agreeable intellectual exercise, have resulted only in fanciful conjectures possessed of no real value or solidity. This has been sometimes the result of this mode of investigation, even in the hands of Neander, whose recent death has been deeply deplored by all who take an interest in the cause of truth and religion in Germany, and whose Church History, which he was not spared to finish, possesses so many distinguished excellencies. I shall certainly make no attempt to theorize about the origin of peculiar notions or opinions held by particular individuals or classes of

men; but, having ascertained what opinions were actually maintained, and what were the grounds on which they were supported, will endeavour to render you some assistance in forming a right Scriptural estimate of their accuracy, importance, and bearings, and of the way in which the truth upon the point, if it be still a matter of controversy in the church, may be best defended and promoted, and the error may be most successfully refuted and discouraged.

But while it is with the history of doctrines or dogmas that we are to be chiefly engaged, it is with doctrines, not in the more limited, but in the more extensive sense in which the word is employed, as comprehending *all those points* about which information is given us in Scripture—all those discussions which the Word of God affords any materials for deciding. The word *doctrine* is sometimes used in a much more limited sense than this, as comprehending only those portions of Scriptural truth, the knowledge and belief of which bear more immediately upon the personal salvation of men. Thus, it is customary to speak of the doctrine, government, worship, and discipline of the church of Christ, where *doctrine*, as distinguished from government, worship, and discipline, or according to a usage common among the older writers in our language, as distinguished from *discipline*, which then commonly included also government and worship, is evidently to be taken in the limited sense which has just been described. The Word of God, however, gives us some information about the government, worship, and discipline of the church, though not so full and explicit as that which it communicates concerning doctrine, in the more limited sense of the word. And any thing which the Scripture really teaches upon these points may be called a doctrine, as well as what it proclaims concerning God and the way of salvation. It is in the widest sense of the word that we use the term *doctrine*, as including every thing that is contained in, or may be deduced from, Scripture, even as to the way in which the government, worship, and discipline of the church of God

ought to be regulated; so that the course of instruction in this department will be, in some measure, supplementary to the whole of the course of instruction which you will receive in systematic theology. It can, I think, for instance, be satisfactorily proved, that the introduction into the government of the church, of prelates, as a distinct class of functionaries from the ordinary pastors of congregations, possessed of superior jurisdiction, and of some exclusive privileges, not to speak of archbishops, primates, patriarchs, and popes—that the addition made by the Church of Rome, of five other sacraments to baptism and the Lord's Supper, and some of the ceremonies by which the administration of the authorized sacraments is accompanied in other churches—that the implacable discipline which obtained for a time in the early church, and the entire want of discipline which obtains in some churches of modern times—are opposed to the testimony of Scripture; or, in other words, that there are sufficient materials in Scripture to prove that these things ought not to exist in the church of Christ. The discussion of these points, then, comes fairly under the head of doctrine, in the wide sense in which it may, without impropriety, be employed; and we will have repeated occasions, in tracing the history of doctrines, to show you not only that the alleged historical grounds on which, principally, some of these innovations are based, are untenable, but that the history of the church combines with the informations of God's Word in leading us to the conclusion that they ought not to be admitted.

The history, then, of doctrines in this wide sense, and of the discussions and controversies which have taken place regarding them since the canon of Scripture was completed, constitutes the main subject to which your attention is to be here directed, and this is a very important and arduous department of theological study. The leading objects to be kept in view, in surveying the different doctrinal discussions which have taken place, are these—1*st*, To ascertain whether or not the Scripture does afford any materials for deciding the ques-

tions that may have been broached or discussed, and if so, to point out what its decision is; and then, 2*d*, to estimate the value or weight of the topics that may have been brought under discussion, and of the truths and errors that may have been maintained, and to indicate the lessons which the survey may be fitted to suggest, as to the way and manner in which the truths may be most successfully defended, and the errors most successfully exposed.

Among the arduous difficulties attending a historical survey of doctrinal discussions, with the view of assisting you in forming a right estimate of the principles involved in them, and in learning the lessons which they are fitted to teach, one is to hit the right medium between bigotry and latitudinarianism—between the extreme, on the one hand, of practically regarding almost all truth and all error as equally important, and unceremoniously denouncing as heretics men who were otherwise and in the main respectable and orthodox, but who may have been tempted to cherish doubts, or to embrace errors, upon some points of no great intrinsic importance; and the extreme, on the other hand, of treating differences of opinion that really involve important doctrinal principles, and in their full development affect important Scriptural truths, as if they were mere logomachies, and involved nothing vital or valuable. Both extremes are erroneous and dangerous, both ought to be carefully avoided; but to hit the right medium between them, to temper aright zeal for the whole truth of God, for all that he has revealed in his Word, with forbearance and candour towards those who have fallen into error, and a fair and reasonable estimate of the real magnitude and importance of their errors, is no easy matter, and needs much of the guidance of the Spirit of wisdom. The history of theology exhibits many instances in which what was originally put forth as a mere difference in words, or in the mode of explanation, has assumed the form, at length, of a great and palpable deviation from the faith once delivered to the saints. And such cases are fitted to lead men to lean

to the side of taking ready alarm at every deviation from accustomed phraseology, to regard with jealousy, and to treat with severity, every error, however comparatively unimportant it may appear. On the other hand, there is a forbearance and moderation in a sound and Scriptural sense, which an enlarged and impartial survey of doctrinal controversies, and especially an actual perusal of the writings of those whose views may differ from our own, is fitted to produce. The unprincipled latitudinarianism of some writers on ecclesiastical history, manifests great ignorance of Scriptural truth, and an utter want of a sense of the responsibility connected with rightly apprehending the most important doctrines of revelation. But in avoiding this extreme, which is really little else at bottom than a form of infidelity, we should not run into the other extreme, of making a man an offender for a word, or of looking upon almost all errors as if they were about equally deadly and dangerous, and treating them with the same severity of indiscriminate condemnation.

In conducting the ordinary business of the course, I mean to follow very much the plan which I have hitherto pursued. I intend to lecture on three days in each week, and the lecture days, both in the junior and senior class, will be the same, viz., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. In both classes, I mean to devote Tuesday to examinations, and Thursday to giving supplemental information of a literary kind, connected with the subjects of lecture and examination, notices of books, and extracts from them—a practice which serves much the same purpose as what the Germans usually expound under a distinct head, under the name of Encyclopædia, and which, I think, we have already found in experience to be useful in cultivating a taste for the study of professional literature. I must, in accordance with the general principles on which our curriculum is based, embody my whole course of instruction, like my colleagues, in two divisions, delivering both each session—the first to a junior class, consisting of second-year's students, and the second to a

senior class, consisting of third-year's students. I have already prepared a larger number of lectures than can be delivered in two sessions, at the rate of three a-week, and will therefore need to contract my materials, omitting what may seem least necessary and useful. The great practical difficulty, in following out these arrangements, is to divide my whole course into two sections of equal length—a difficulty arising from so large a portion in the very centre of it being occupied with an examination of the theology of the Reformation, as contrasted with that of the Council of Trent. This must, in some way or other, be broken up, and assigned partly to the junior, and partly to the senior class. I am not yet prepared to state any details as to the way in which the separation and reconstruction may be effected, except that I propose to discuss the subjects of original sin and free-will, which formed a portion of the lectures on the theology of the Reformation, under the head of the Pelagian and Semi-Pelagian controversies in the fifth and sixth centuries. By this, and some other similar changes, I hope to be able to arrange my materials in such a way, that the course for the junior class shall consist principally of a survey of the theological controversies which preceded the Reformation; and the course for the senior class, of those which accompanied and succeeded that great era in the history of the church.

There are many considerations which give to the study of ecclesiastical history, and especially of historical theology, a special importance in the present day, and in the existing circumstances of the church of Christ. The existing aspect of the church and the world clearly point out certain departments of theological science as at present peculiarly important, and specially requiring the attention of those who aspire to be the instructors of others; and it so happens that these, more perhaps than almost any others, admit of and demand a historical treatment, and may have much light cast upon them by researches into the history of the church. I allude especially to the Popish controversy, and

the controversies which so unhappily divide the church of Christ about matters of government and worship. Whether we turn our thoughts to the great adversary of Christ, whom we are called upon steadfastly to resist, the Romish apostasy, now rising again into renewed strength and vigour, at least in its spiritual character and influence, or to the points that separate the evangelical churches, whose breaches we should desire to heal, without, however, compromising any of God's truths or ordinances, it is very manifest, that the controversies to which I have referred must, for the present generation, occupy a large share of men's attention, and ought, therefore, to be well known to ministers of the gospel, and to all who take an interest in the welfare of the churches of Christ. Now, in regard to many of the topics involved in these controversies, the errors which have been held are based to some extent upon alleged historical, as distinguished from Scriptural, evidence; and it is important to be able to prove, not only that the alleged historical evidence in favour of the errors is wholly inconclusive, but that a fair and full investigation of the historical documents gives results in full accordance with what seems to be the meaning of Scripture, and even affords some assistance in ascertaining its real import.

I must, before concluding, direct your attention to the consideration, that the present aspect of the church and the world is well fitted to impress the conviction, that churches and ministers are likely to stand in special need of all the light and wisdom which they can derive from the history of God's past dealings with his people, to guide them in the discharge of the arduous duties to which they may be called, and that this should stir you up to special zeal and diligence in acquiring a thorough knowledge of ecclesiastical history. Each age and condition of the church has its special duties and its special dangers. The most important and essential qualifications, at all times and in all circumstances, for ministers of the gospel, are love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and desire of saving souls, to be found only in renewed

natures. These qualifications rank unmeasurably superior in importance to all others, occupying a distinct platform of their own, and nothing can compensate for the want of them. But, then, neither on the other hand should they be held to compensate for the want of other necessary qualifications, of any thing that may be really fitted to be useful, in guiding to a correct knowledge and an efficient discharge of present duty. There can be nothing acceptable to God, and honouring to Christ, nothing that is really the discharge of Christian duty, where there is not the spirit of love—of love to God and love to man; but it is of no small importance, especially in these times, that to the spirit of love there should be united the spirit of power and of a sound mind; and it is my earnest desire and prayer, that the study of ecclesiastical history, and especially of the history of theological discussions, may be blessed by the great Head of the church, not only for assisting you to form correct and intelligent views of divine truth, but for promoting, in combination with ardent zeal for the truth of God and the spiritual welfare of men, that enlargement of mind, that sound judgment, and that manly sense, which in their place are so important in guarding against errors and dangers, in making you workmen that need not to be ashamed, and in securing the unity and efficiency of the church of the living God.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

ON

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

BY JAMES BUCHANAN, D.D., S.S.T.P.

NOVEMBER 7, 1850.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

We are now enabled, in the good providence of God, to carry into full practical operation, the simple but most sagacious scheme for the improvement of our theological education, for which we are indebted to the profound practical wisdom of our venerated and lamented father—Dr Chalmers. That scheme is so self-evidently necessary and reasonable,—so clearly conducive to the highest interests of the church,—and so imperatively demanded by the exigencies of society, that one is almost tempted to wonder that it had never been suggested before: and still more, that, after having been submitted to the Royal Commission on the affairs of the Scottish Universities in 1828, it should have remained as a dead letter in the records of that Commission, unheeded alike by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, until the era of the Disruption, when the church of our fathers, no longer established and endowed, but at length unfettered and free, recognised at once its paramount importance, and resolved, with the aid of her intelligent adherents, to adopt it, as the likeliest means of elevating the standard of theological acquirement, and securing the inestimable benefit of a thoroughly-trained and well-educated ministry. It amounts in substance to this, and to nothing more than this—that, for the students of each year, a separate class should be provided with a distinct set of lectures and exercises, adapted to their respective stages of progress; so that no student

should, in any circumstances, be compelled to study theology backwards, as many were wont to do in former times, but that every one might find his appropriate place each session, and be carried forward in a regular and progressive course from the commencement till the close of his academic attendance: and that this important object should be accomplished simply by dividing between two professors the unwieldy subject of Systematic Theology—each of these professors having two separate classes, and two distinct sets of lectures, so as to carry on concurrently, but apart, the education of the students of *four* different years.

But the principle of the subdivision of labour in this, as in every other department, having been admitted, and provision having been made for four separate and successive classes corresponding to the four years of a student's course, there still remained a practical difficulty—the difficulty, namely, of apportioning the various topics of theology between two professors, so as to secure the regular exposition of them in a measure proportioned to their relative importance, and in the order best adapted to subserve the ends of a thoroughly-scientific discipline. This difficulty does not seem to have occurred at first to the mind of Dr Chalmers, but when it was suggested to him, the more he thought of it, the more was he impressed with a sense of its magnitude. He saw that the topics of theology were so closely related to each other, that there might be a risk of impairing the completeness and marring the symmetry of a systematic exposition of them, were they to be arbitrarily divided and parcelled out between two professors, who could scarcely be expected, however they might agree in substance, to view the subject from the same stand-point, or to follow precisely the same order of exposition; and that this risk could only be avoided or overcome by some such expedient as might serve to maintain the substantial unity of the system, while it gave scope for the full development of its constituent parts. After much consideration and frequent conference, it was suggested by our present distinguished Principal, that

systematic theology, in so far as it includes doctrines bearing on the salvation of the souls of men *considered individually*, should be kept entire in the hands of one professor, and should form the subject of his lectures to the students of the second and third years; and that while, as heretofore, the first year should be devoted to the study of Apologetics, or the evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, under the conduct of another professor, the same professor might resume his acquaintance with his former students in the fourth year of their course, and carry them through that part of systematic theology which relates to the body of professing believers *considered collectively*, including the doctrine of the church, the sacraments, and the ministry, and terminating in the lessons of pastoral theology. This valuable suggestion was cheerfully adoped by our lamented father, who regarded it as the likeliest expedient for surmounting the difficulty to which I have referred, and for preserving the entireness and symmetry of a systematic exposition of the truth; and having obtained the sanction of the church, it constitutes the basis of the system which will now be carried out into full practical operation in the hall of the New College.

According to this arrangement, the subject which has been committed to me embraces the whole range of systematic theology, in so far as it relates to the state, and bears on the salvation, of men, considered individually, and includes all the topics which are usually treated in systems of divinity, with the exception only of apologetics and the doctrine of the church, considered as a collective body. This subject is large enough to afford ample materials for study during two sessions of the academic course; and its importance, with a view to your preparation for the ministry, can scarcely be exaggerated.

I am aware that a certain latent but influential prejudice exists in the minds of some against the study of systematic theology, and that when it has found expression, it has given birth to various objections, more or less plausible, to this part of our academic discipline. Some of the questions that are

discussed, and many of the technical terms that are necessarily employed, in a complete course of divinity, have been described as mere scholastic subtleties—the remnants of a darker age, when the human mind was cramped and fettered by bandages of its own fabrication; and it has been thought that the free theology of modern times may dispense with these artificial aids, and may even grow up to a more robust and vigorous strength, if left unencumbered by the forms of systematic exposition. The study of Christianity, they say, is one thing, as Christianity appears in the living Word of God; it is altogether another thing, as Christianity appears in the dead systems of men. Had God intended, it is sometimes added, that his truth should assume the form of a system, the Holy Spirit, who inspired the Scriptures, would have exhibited it in the order of a regular exposition; but he has taken a different method of instructing the minds of men. He has provided for their use a book, replete with wholesome doctrine, and adapted, it must be presumed, to their capacities and wants; yet a book of varied and miscellaneous contents, in which divine truth is taught, not after the forms and methods of human systems, but in a way peculiar to itself: it is profusely scattered over the pages of Scripture, sometimes in the shape of doctrinal statements or moral lessons; at other times in connection with biographical notices, or the historical development of God's dispensations to his people; sometimes it is presented in parables, sometimes in psalms, sometimes in letters or epistles: but nowhere is it thrown into the form of a regular system, or arranged after the artificial method of the schools. This striking difference between the form in which Christianity is presented in the Scriptures, and that which it has assumed in modern times, has often been insisted on as a legitimate prejudice against the study of systematic theology; and that prejudice has been generally exhibited in the shape of objections against creeds and confessions of faith, while it has occasionally appeared, also, in the form of opposition to all systematized theology, whether as expounded in the

formularies of the church, or in the writings of systematic divines.

Now, in offering a brief vindication of the course of study on which we are about to enter, it is of considerable importance that we should form, in the first instance, a correct conception of the *status quæstionis*, in order that, by stripping it of all irrelevant matter, we may decide it on its proper merits. The question, then, is *not* whether the method in which God has been pleased to present his revealed truth to us in the Word be, or be not, the best adapted to the purposes for which it was designed. We firmly believe that it is; and no enlightened advocate of systematic theology, however devoted to his favourite study, will ever breathe a wish that the order of revelation had been different from what it is, or that its precious materials had been arranged otherwise than as they are. Many advantages accrue from the mode of instruction which is pursued in Scripture, which could not have been attained, in an equal measure, by any more artificial system; and there is a charm in the incidental lessons that are taught by biography, and parable, and type, which would be utterly lost were they exhibited in any other way,—just as there is a charm in the contrasted beauties of the wildflowers which spring up irregularly along our meadows and hedgerows, which would be lost were they transplanted into separate plots, and cased in the artificial frameworks of a garden. The truths of Scripture are presented in a way admirably fitted for all the most important purposes of popular instruction; and no question need ever arise—or were it raised, could for a moment be entertained—whether it is possible to improve on the methods of divine teaching; but receiving the Bible as it is, and receiving it gratefully as God's Word, the question may be entertained, What use are we to make of it, and in what way may we best acquire for ourselves, or impart to others, a comprehensive knowledge of its contents?

Nor is it a question with us, or with any enlightened advocate of systematic theology, whether the study either of the

creeds and confessions of the church, or of the systems of scientific divines, should supersede the study of Scripture itself, nor even whether the latter study should be subordinated to the former, so as to make the sense of Scripture dependent on the authority of its human expounders. There is unquestionably a danger, arising from this source, that is incident to the study of systematic theology; just as, in philosophy, there is a risk of attaching more weight to the theories of man than to the facts and phenomena of nature; and if the opponents of systems were satisfied with warning us of this danger and guarding us against it, we should owe them thanks for reminding us of what might prove to us, as it has often been to others, a temptation and a snare. No error could be more fatal, and no method of instruction more pernicious to the church, than that which should virtually supersede the Word of God by the comments of men, or substitute man's authority for that of God in matters of faith. And in this view, and to this extent, we could cordially subscribe to the words of Lord Bacon, so often quoted against us, when he says, "The interpretations of the Scriptures, which are the fountains of the water of life, are of two sorts: methodical, and solute or at large. For this divine water, which excelleth so much that of Jacob's well, is drawn forth much in the same kind as natural water useth to be out of wells and fountains: either it is first forced up into a cistern, and from thence fetched and derived for use, or else it is drawn and received in buckets and vessels immediately where it springeth—the former sort whereof, though it seem to be the more ready, yet, in my judgment, is more subject to corrupt. This is that method which hath exhibited unto us the scholastical divinity, whereby divinity hath been reduced into an art, as into a cistern, and the streams of doctrine, or positions, fetched and derived from thence."* But this is not the question;—it being admitted on all hands that the Scriptures, and the Scriptures alone, are the infallible standard of religious truth, by which "all contro-

* Bacon, Advancement of Learning, Works, i. 226.

versies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest,"*—no question can be entertained whether either the study of Scripture should be superseded by that of human systems, or whether the former should be prosecuted in subordination to the latter. But another question may be considered, viz., Whether, and how far, the testimony of the church, in her public confessions, or the labours of individual divines, may be a help to the right understanding of the Scriptures; and if they be, in what way we may best avail ourselves of the benefit which God has thus graciously vouchsafed?

With these explanations, the *status quæstionis* is equally clear and simple. It amounts to this: The Scriptures, containing a vast variety of information on many distinct but related topics, are in our own hands—is it lawful, and if lawful, might it be useful, to arrange these topics in the order of their natural relations to one another—to consider each by itself, and to collect together all the scattered rays of light from different parts of the Bible, so as to concentrate them on its illustration? This is the question, and the only question, that requires solution in order to the complete vindication of systematic theology—I mean of the lawfulness and utility of systematic theology, as such, not of the wisdom or worth of every particular system. And there are considerations bearing on the solution of that question which must commend themselves, I think, to the understanding of every reflecting man.

We are to regard the Scriptures as a revelation from God, designed for the instruction, and adapted to the capacities, of the human mind. Now, the human mind is so constituted, that when a complex subject is presented to it, every man who considers it forthwith begins to analyze it into its constituent parts, to mark the relations subsisting between these parts, and to arrange them, if not in a written system, yet

* Westminster Confession, c. i.

in an order suggested by the laws of association, which has all the effect of a system, inscribed on the tablet of his own mind. He does all this by a necessity of his nature, under the influence of those laws of thought of which he cannot divest himself; insomuch, that every opponent of what has been called systematic or scholastic theology, will be found to have a system of his own—not, it may be, a very comprehensive or complete one, if it has been elaborated by a process of independent thought without the aid of those suggestions and helps which the experience of others afford—but still a system in which the various topics are somehow arranged in his mind, in a manner different from that in which they are presented in Scripture; so that the question is not between a system or none, for a system of some kind there must be, wherever theology is made a subject of reflective thought, but between a system framed with or without the aid of the experience and labour of others.

Again, the contents of Scripture, however miscellaneous, afford the materials for a complete system of religious truth; and its topics are so related to each other, as to fall naturally and necessarily into the order of a regular scheme. These topics are distinct, but not isolated—they are mutually connected and interdependent, and the relations subsisting between them cannot be marked without suggesting the propriety of an orderly and systematic treatment of them. If any one doubt the truth of this remark, or has not hitherto attended to it, let him consider whether any, and what, relations subsist either between the different parts of which Scripture is composed, or the various doctrines which it reveals; and he will find that it contains within itself the elements of a system, and that it cannot be understood or unfolded without reference to this important feature. Of the manifold relations, which constitute, as it were, the ligaments connecting one part with another, I shall only mention two—the first, a relation of prior and posterior, in point of time; the second, a relation of causality and dependence in respect of

connection. That any two parts of Scripture, or any two doctrines which it contains, may stand related to each other, the first as prior, the second as posterior in point of time, is too evident to be questioned. The New Testament is posterior to the Old, the prophets to the law, the law to the patriarchal dispensation; the revelation of the scheme of grace is posterior to the fall, and that again to the covenant of works, and this to the creation of man: so that not only are the different parts of which the Bible is composed related to each other, as prior or posterior, but the different doctrines which it teaches are so connected as that one presupposes another; and this relation, which is one of historical or chronological connection, is the basis of those systems, which, following the order of successive development, and tracing the course of the divine dispensations, exhibit the truth as it was gradually revealed, from the commencement to the close of the canon of Scripture. But there are other relations besides that of chronological connection. Any two doctrines, when examined, may be found to have such a relation to each other, that the second necessarily presupposes the first, insomuch that it could neither be understood in its full meaning, nor proved as to its certain truth, unless the prior truth were assumed and admitted; thus, the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins through an atoning sacrifice, is not only posterior in the order of historical announcement, but posterior also in the order of our natural conceptions, to the fact of human guilt, and the fall of man; as these again are subsequent to, and necessarily presuppose a law, a Lawgiver, and a Judge; and this order arising from the *internal relations* of the truths themselves, is the principle of those systems which, without adhering to the actual line of historical revelation, exhibit the scheme of revealed religion in a series of *loci communes*, arranging the topics according to their nature, so as that those are first discussed which are either presupposed or founded on in the subsequent ones.

Now, if the contents of Scripture be such as that it affords

materials for the construction of a system, and, if the laws of the human mind be such as that they naturally prompt, or even necessitate us to analyze, compare, and connect the parts of which any complex subject is composed, it only remains to inquire whether it be less warrantable, or can reasonably be held to be more presumptuous, to treat the lessons of inspiration after the method of an orderly and systematic exposition, than it is to subject the facts of experience, or the phenomena of nature, to a similar treatment, so as to arrange them under distinct heads, and reduce them to a scientific form. The volume of nature is presented to our inspection with a variety of contents quite as numerous, and as miscellaneously mixed, as are those of the inspired Word. The one is the work of God as the other is his Word. The human mind contemplates the former, and is bewildered and perplexed rather than instructed, until, prompted by its natural instincts, and governed by its peculiar laws, it analyzes the complex subject into its constituent parts, compares one with another, arranges them, according to their properties or relations, under distinct heads; and, in short, constructs as many systems of science as there are clearly separable fields of inquiry. We are conscious of no presumption in dealing thus with the works of God; and by systematic arrangement our studies are prosecuted with greater facility, and with tenfold more success, than they could have been had we continued to wander over the whole field, without any landmarks to direct, or any definite aim to govern our course. The wildflowers of our meadows and hedgerows might lose half their beauty were they transplanted and cased in the artificial frameworks of a garden; but, is it not useful and even necessary, for the purposes both of study and of instruction, to classify and arrange them so as to give birth to *a science of botany?* Now, is it more presumptuous or less warrantable to study the Word of God in a similar way—to review its entire contents—to select those which bear on any particular topic, wherever they may be found, and arrange

them by themselves—that, by comparing one with another, we may ascertain what is the mind of the Spirit, and arrive at a comprehensive knowledge of the whole counsel of God? And what is systematic theology, but an attempt, more or less successful, to accomplish this design? I find, in the first part of Genesis, the statement of a doctrinal fact which must have an important bearing on the whole future history of our race, and possibly also on any remedial scheme that might be proposed—the fact of the fall of man, and the curse pronounced on the ground for man's sake. I find this same fact referred to in the subsequent Scriptures—in the history of Noah, in the psalms of David, in the teaching of our Lord, in the letters of his apostles. May I not lawfully compare Scripture with Scripture, and connect these various passages together, so as to obtain a correct and comprehensive view of the doctrine of original sin? Every serious student of Scripture will instinctively do so for the satisfaction of his own mind; and the professional student of theology does nothing more, except by availing himself of the aid which his education may afford for arriving at a clearer and fuller knowledge of the revealed truth of God.

In this, as in many other cases, the objections which have been urged against a thing good in itself, have been suggested by the abuse of it. The necessity and the use of systematic theology would never, probably, have been called in question, had it not been subjected to a method of treatment, which was liable to just exception, both because it complicated the simple truth of God with the theories of men, and introduced the subtle distinctions of the schools into the faith of the church. Let any one read a system of divinity concocted in mediæval times, while the Aristotelian philosophy maintained its ascendency, or even some of those produced by the divines of the Reformation, while they still retained the taint of the old metaphysics, and he will be at no loss to account for the origin, or even to acknowledge in part the reasonableness, of that powerful reac-

tion by which others have been thrown to the opposite extreme, and induced to abjure systems altogether, as inconsistent with the spirit of a free theology, or with the reverence which is due to the simple Word of God. Be it remembered, however, that the abuse of any thing is no argument against its legitimate use; and, further, that the erroneous or injudicious methods which may have been pursued by some writers on systematic theology, afford no reason for depriving ourselves of the manifold advantages which may be derived from an orderly exposition of divine truth.

But there is reason to fear that the prejudice against systematic theology, to which I have referred, springs in some cases from a deeper source than any mere error of judgment; that it arises from a strong, though perhaps latent, aversion to definite articles of faith, or at least to a complete exhibition of the whole of God's revealed truth. There is a spurious liberalism which disposes many to make light of the difference betwixt truth and error—which cherishes, and even glories in, a spirit of indifference in regard to points of faith, and which cannot tolerate either the creeds and confessions of the church, or the systematic works of her divines, simply because they present the truth in a definite form, and the whole truth, without the suppression even of its most obnoxious doctrines. Now, where there is an aversion to any particular part of the system, or a disposition to rest in a partial view of it, such a feeling finds its likeliest and safest vent in declamation against that method of treating theology by which it is compelled to confront every one of the truths of God in orderly succession, and to pronounce definitely on their respective claims to be received as articles of faith. And if this be, as we believe it is, the real origin of much of the opposition that has been offered to systematic theology, it appears to us to suggest a strong argument in its favour; since it reminds us that there is a tendency in the human mind to take a partial and defective view of divine truth, and that this tendency,

which is alike strong and dangerous, can only be effectually counteracted by such a method of theological instruction as shall secure the study of the whole counsel of God. And this end, as it appears to us, may be best secured by two obvious expedients,—first, by the continuous study of large portions of Scripture; and, secondly, by the systematic arrangement of the results of biblical study in the order of a simple, judicious, and practical scheme or system of divine truth. With a view to the *former*, we have selected as our text-book that inspired system of theology which is contained in the Epistle to the Romans—an epistle which you will be expected to read in the original Greek, while we attempt to analyze and expound it; and, with a view to the *latter*, we shall endeavour to construct a scheme of biblical theology, comprehending a discussion and proof of all the more important doctrines of the Christian faith.

If we would select the right method, we must seriously consider in the first instance, and keep steadily in view throughout, the END at which we ought to aim, or the OBJECT which we should seek to attain. Now, when any one engages in the study of theology, there are *three* distinct and different ends, one or more of which he must be presumed to have in view:—1*st*, He may seek to acquire as much knowledge of divine truth as is necessary for the salvation of his own soul, for his personal enlightenment, edification, and comfort as a disciple of Christ; and this is an end which is common to the professional and the non-professional student of God's revealed truth; or, 2*dly*, He may seek, in addition to the knowledge of divine truth which is necessary for the salvation of his own soul, to acquire that higher measure of knowledge, and those more comprehensive views, which may qualify him for becoming the instructor of others, and undertaking the pastoral charge of a flock, as a minister of Christ; and this is an end which is not contemplated by the private student of Scripture, but is common to all who aspire

to the office and work of the ministry; or, *3dly*, He may seek, in addition both to the knowledge which is necessary for the salvation of his own soul, and the higher measure of knowledge which is necessary to qualify him for the work of public religious instruction, to acquire that still more exalted and extensive knowledge of divine truth, which belongs only to the more eminent proficients in theological study, and which fits them, not only for ministering to a particular congregation, but also for entering on a still wider field of usefulness, and taking part in those learned labours by which the sacred cause may be defended against the assaults of its enemies, and the faith of the universal church established and confirmed. These three ends are distinct and different, but they are in no wise inconsistent or mutually exclusive. The same individual may warrantably have regard to them all in the prosecution of his theological studies; but what I would have you particularly to mark, is the relationship in which they stand to each other; they are so related that, in the order in which they have just been enumerated, each of the posterior terms invariably presupposes the prior one, while in no case does the previous term necessarily infer that which succeeds it; in other words, the first end may be contemplated without the second, and the second without the third; but the third presupposes the second, and the second presupposes the first. A man may study the Bible, and such works as throw light on the meaning of its contents, with no other view than to satisfy his own mind as to the method of his personal salvation, and the course of his practical duty in the private walks of life; or, he may study theology as a science, with the view of acquiring that measure of religious knowledge which may fit him for becoming the instructor of others in the walk of pastoral duty, but without aspiring to higher attainments than are commonly acquired by an educated ministry; or, under the influence, not of ambition or vain glory, but of zeal for the cause of Christ, and love for the universal church, he may devote himself, according to

his peculiar tastes and gifts, to such a profound investigation of some one department of theology, or of the cognate branches of knowledge, as may fit him for maintaining and defending the truth against all assailants on the arena of public discussion, and for bequeathing to future times some enduring memorial of his labours in her sacred cause.

It is the duty, and it will be the earnest desire, of every conscientious professor of theology, to whom the church has committed the responsible task of training up her future ministers, to have regard to each of the three ends which have been specified, and to direct his efforts to their attainment, in a measure proportioned to their relative importance. The first and most fundamental of all, consisting as it does in that knowledge of divine truth which is necessary to the salvation of the soul, is presupposed as indispensable in every course of professional study, and is often assumed as what must or might have been acquired under the teaching of domestic piety, or the public ministry of the Word. In a land like ours, where the Bible and the catechism are so generally diffused, and so commonly taught, both in the household and the school, and where, moreover, there exists a pure and often powerful gospel ministry, proclaiming, from Sabbath to Sabbath, the great fundamental truths of our holy faith, it may reasonably be expected that those who, at a ripe age, enrol themselves as students of divinity, and who have already been admitted, after due examination, as members of the Christian church, will bring with them that average amount of religious knowledge which may be acquired by all who enjoy those inestimable advantages; and that they will be prepared for entering at once on that higher course of study which may tend, under the divine blessing, to enlarge and mature their views of divine truth, and to fit them for the work of public religious instruction. But reasonable as the supposition may be, it must not be assumed as certain, without the most conclusive evidence. An error here would be like a flaw in the foundation; to proceed on a false assumption,

would be to rear our superstructure on the sand. Are we warranted in assuming, that every student is already possessed of that knowledge which is necessary for the salvation of his soul; that he has so profited by the Bible and the catechism, and the lessons of godly parents and a faithful ministry, as to stand in no need to be taught what be "the first principles of the oracles of God;" and that we may safely address him as one who knows the truth as it is in Jesus, while we proceed to unfold to his view the system of doctrinal theology? Would to God that it were so; but should it be taken for granted, as a matter of course, that every member of the church, or every student in the hall, is "wise unto salvation?" Not to speak of the *extent* of his knowledge, which may vary indefinitely in different individuals, according to the advantages which they have respectively enjoyed in early life—not to inquire how often he has read the whole Bible, how carefully he has considered the lessons of the catechism, or how attentively he has waited on a gospel ministry—is it quite certain, even on the supposition of his having acquired a fair average *amount* of information, that his knowledge is of the *right kind*—is it spiritual, is it vital, is it transforming, is it saving? is it that knowledge of the things of God which no natural man can possess, but which belongs to those by whom these things are spiritually discerned? is it that knowledge which contains in it the principle and germ of a new creation, and of which our Lord spoke when he said, "*This is life eternal*, that they might *know* thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent?" This, this is the knowledge that is necessary for the salvation of our own souls—not a speculative opinion, but a spiritual apprehension of the truth—not a dead orthodoxy, but a living faith; and as it is necessary for the salvation of our own souls, so it is not less indispensable as a preparative, both for the successful study of theology, and the powerful preaching of the Word. It is true that men, destitute of this spiritual knowledge, may acquire, by the natural exercise of their faculties on the

various topics of theology, such an amount of doctrinal and historical information, and such a faculty of explaining, illustrating, and defending the truths which they have been led to adopt, that they may discourse of them fluently and eloquently from the pulpit, and even find a certain pleasure in doing so, arising solely from the vigorous action and healthful exercise of their intellectual powers. Nay, such men, especially if highly gifted, are more likely, perhaps, than many others who have been imbued with a more spiritual taste, to devote themselves to the sedulous cultivation of some branch of theological learning, and to obtain their reward (alas! a temporal one), in the distinctions of human scholarship, and the prizes of literary ambition. Yet, still it may be truly affirmed, that for all the highest and noblest ends, whether of the Christian ministry, or of Christian authorship, they are utterly disqualified by that radical defect —the want of a spiritual apprehension—a saving knowledge of divine truth. Without this, there can be no security for their progress as students of theology, or for their success as preachers of the gospel. The reason is obvious:—"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned;" and until he is "renewed in the spirit of his mind, and brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light," much as he may delight in the exercise of his intellectual powers, he can have no relish for the substance of gospel truth, no feeling of personal interest in it, no experience of sensible enjoyment in it for its own sake; and hence, if conscience be not utterly dead within him, he will instinctively recoil from the close examination of many points that must, in his present state, be offensive or alarming, and will be tempted to bestow his time and strength on the mere externals or accessories of the system—quitting hold of the substance, and grasping its shadow.

Now, to this fundamental, this indispensable knowledge—the knowledge which maketh wise unto salvation, and which

is essential for the welfare of your own souls—frequent reference must be made in the course of a really effective education for the ministry,—not that it belongs to the professorial, as distinguished from the pastoral office, to inculcate the great lessons of practical godliness, but that the study of theology presupposes and requires this knowledge as its prime and indispensable condition, and that every professor must be held to be so far forth also a pastor of those who are committed to his trust, as to be warranted in reminding them from time to time of their deep personal interest in the truths which they are studying, and in speaking to them as men who have souls to be saved, consciences to be quickened, hearts to be impressed, and wills to be persuaded, as well as intellects to be enlightened and informed.

This preliminary knowledge, then, being assumed to exist, or at least declared to be indispensable, the distinct object of a course of professional study is to acquire such an additional measure of knowledge as may qualify *all* for the efficient discharge of pastoral duty as ministers of religion, and as may prepare a *few* for entering on those still wider fields of public usefulness which demand extraordinary attainments, and which afford them the opportunity of becoming benefactors to the church at large. Of these two ends, the first is common to all; the second is confined to a limited number, whose gifts and acquirements may fit them for pre-eminent service; and both must be kept in view, and each obtain that measure of attention which its comparative importance deserves. That end which is common to all, demands the first place in our thoughts,—viz., so to arrange our course of study as to secure that, under the divine blessing, every student may, with ordinary fidelity and diligence, acquire a correct and comprehensive knowledge of the scheme of divine truth, so as to be qualified for being a useful and efficient instructor of his fellow-men—"a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word

of life." To this object, in the first instance, and next to the salvation of his own soul, should all the energies and efforts of every student be devoted ; and, even in the case of those, if such there be amongst us, who, instinct with genius and imbued with lofty aspirations, look forward to future eminence on a wider field, the immediate work, the incumbent duty which, before all others, they should sedulously perform, is that of preparing themselves for the efficient discharge of their duties as ministers of the Word and pastors of the flock in any field, however large or limited, in which the Head of the church may call them to labour. And if you consider how much knowledge of divine truth is diffused among the godly in all our congregations, what a deep insight into the meaning of Scripture—their chief, if not their only study—what a profound practical wisdom, arising from their own experience of the truth, in trials and temptations, in exercises and agonies of soul, belongs to many of the Spirit-taught peasantry of Scotland—you cannot but feel that if you are to be qualified in any measure to minister to their instruction and edification, you must have, at your early age, much to learn, and much, perhaps, also to unlearn, before you can rise to the level of your high calling, and discharge, with any measure of success, the simplest duties of the ministerial office.

With a view to this great end, the whole scheme of divine truth, and the relations, connections, and dependencies of its various parts, should be carefully studied. But here a great practical difficulty arises, which must be felt equally by professor and student: It is impossible, in any course of theological study, to overtake the whole range of theological truth. Nay, it is impossible to exhaust any one topic of the system, so as to leave nothing unexplained that may yet require further investigation. It is a great truth, gentlemen, and it is well to be thus reminded of it, that this is the condition under which all our religious inquiries must be

conducted, not only during the brief term of your college attendance, but throughout the whole of your future life. The farther you advance, the field will be seen still stretching onward before you; the higher you rise, the horizon will seem to widen around you; and never, while your minds are finite, and God infinite, will you exhaust theology—never, while you see as through a glass darkly, will you attain even to that measure of knowledge of which a finite mind is capable when it shall see face to face, and know even as also it is known. But the difficulty being known, the remedy also is obvious. Let a comprehensive outline be sketched—a map, exhibiting the principal topics of theology, and the relations in which they stand to each other. On each of these topics, as it comes in its own order before us, let us not expect to learn every thing at once, as if it could be exhausted; but let us be content to learn a few distinct and definite lessons, which, being clearly understood and thoroughly established, may be registered as part of our ascertained knowledge; while many questions, yet unsolved, relating to the same topic, are reserved for future study, and noted down, with such references as may be suggested, with a view to their ultimate solution. Of course, the lessons which should be selected for your immediate consideration, and which should be illustrated more or less at large in your hearing, will be those which are the most necessary and the most directly subservient to the practical work of the ministry from its very commencement, while the questions which are indicated merely, without being formally discussed, as reserved for future study, will be those whose solution, however important, is not indispensable, and may be postponed without injury, as the work of future years—all devoted, as every minister's years should be, to the acquisition and communication of sacred knowledge.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE:

APOLOGETICAL THEOLOGY—THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH.

BY JAMES BANNERMAN, D.D.,
PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY, NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.

NOVEMBER 7, 1850.

APOLOGETICAL THEOLOGY—THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH.

In that course of theological study, extending over a period of four years, prescribed for the students attending this hall, the topics considered during the *first* and *fourth* years form the two departments of theology more peculiarly allotted to my care. Viewed in relation to doctrinal theology, which, in the restricted sense of the terms, and under the charge of Dr Buchanan, is appointed for the studies of the second and third years, the one portion of my course may be regarded as introductory, and the other as supplementary to it. There are certain preliminary topics of a vital and important kind, to be taken up and discussed before we can properly and intelligently enter on the question of what are the doctrinal contents of a supernatural revelation from God; and these, as introductory to such an inquiry, naturally and rightly occupy the attention of the student during the first year of his course. There are certain other topics that remain to be considered after the contents of the revelation, doctrinally viewed, have been mastered; and these, as supplementary to such a system, are reserved for the studies of the fourth year at the hall. From the topics of the first year's course, the transition is natural to the consideration of the doctrines of Scripture viewed as a dogmatic system; and from that system the transition is no less natural to those interesting and arduous questions remaining to be discussed during the fourth and concluding year of the course.

I. Turning our attention, in the first instance, to those introductory topics that are appointed for the first year's course in theology, it is plain that there are *three* distinct questions of an urgent and vital kind that meet us, before we can enter upon the inquiry as to the contents of an alleged supernatural revelation of truth from God.

First, Can reason, unaided from above, by means of its own discoveries of divine truth, supersede the possibility, or at all events the necessity, of a supernatural revelation from God? or, on the contrary, does reason by what it accomplishes supply the basis, and by what it does not accomplish provide room, for such a revelation?

Second, Have we sufficient evidence of the fact that a supernatural revelation from God has actually been communicated to man?

Third, Have we a complete and infallable record of that revelation?

The discussion of these three questions, in all their extent, is evidently preliminary to the consideration of what the alleged revelation actually contains; and, therefore, that discussion forms the subject of the first year's course of theology at this hall.

1. Does reason, by means of its own discoveries, supersede the possibility, or at least the necessity, of a supernatural communication from God? or, on the contrary, does reason by what it can achieve supply the foundation, and by what it can not achieve open up the place, for such a revelation? It is plain that the answer to such an inquiry as this can only be found in a complete survey of the whole science of natural theology—in its nature and objects—in the method of argument employed in it, and in the kind of evidence which it supplies for its results—in the extent and limit of its discoveries, and in its connection with or subserviency to revealed truth. In the wide field of discussion thus opened up, there are, more especially in the present day, two opposite parties, representatives of extreme opinions on either side, that divide the arena between them.

There is one party, consisting of more than one section, who hold that nature unaided by revelation can do all; there is another party, likewise embracing various sections and modifications of opinion, who hold that nature unaided by revelation can do nothing. In the first class, are to be found those who, less numerous, perhaps, in the present times than formerly, have served themselves heirs to the principles and opinions of the deistical writers of last century, and like them maintain that reason is the only and the all-sufficient revelation to man; and that the light of his own natural understanding is the only light given to guide him in his inquiries after divine truth. In the same class, and more numerous in the present day, because falling in more readily with prevalent modes of feeling and thought, are to be found many who, repudiating the narrow and unstable theory of a rational theology sufficient for every man, have substituted the modern and somewhat more plausible theory of an intuitional theology sufficient for every man. With this latter section of theorists it is not reason, but a certain spiritual intuition, holding communion with the spiritual and the infinite, that reveals to man the knowledge of God and of divine things—a faculty within, that, taking cognizance of these spiritual truths, and realizing them for each man, as it is elevated and developed within him, dispenses with the necessity of any other or external revelation. In both cases, although under somewhat different forms of thought and language, we recognise a party who maintain, as their distinguishing principles, that nature without a revelation from above can do all. But there is a second class, I have said, who, taking up the opposite position, maintain that nature apart from a divine communication can do nothing. In this class are to be found many who, to exalt, as they fancy, the authority of Scripture and the teaching of revelation, would reject the conclusions of nature altogether; and who deny that there is a God to be found in the volume of nature at all, or that his existence and perfections are to be discovered any where else except in the page of

inspiration. And in this class, too, are to be reckoned the adherents of ecclesiastical authority and ecclesiastical teaching, who, rejecting alike the discoveries of reason and the announcements of revelation, as sufficient of themselves, separately or conjoined, to make men acquainted with the knowledge of God aright, reduce all belief in divine things to an act of obedience to the authority of the church.

The revival of the ancient and still unsettled controversy between reason and faith at the present day, and in such forms as these, gives to the discussions of natural theology, in our first year's course, a more than ordinary interest and importance. In the conflict of opinion at present waged all around, it is necessary to search out the ancient landmarks that separate and yet connect the respective provinces of reason and faith, and to demonstrate before the eyes of all that the theology of nature, both in its extent and in its limitations, or rather because of its extent and because of its limitations, is in perfect harmony with the theology of revelation. There may be an alleged theology of nature such as, by its pretensions and its extent, to supplant revelation altogether, whether that theology be due to reason or be due to intuition; and therefore it is necessary to trace the limits beyond which nature cannot go, and whence, if there comes to man light, or a discovery of God at all, it must come to him supernaturally from God himself. We must show that nature cannot do all, and that what it cannot do it is for revelation to accomplish. On the other hand, there may be an alleged theology of nature so narrow in its extent and so insufficient in its evidences, as to lay down no foundation for revelation at all, and to furnish no common principles upon which such a revelation could be established; and, therefore, it is necessary to show, that although nature cannot do all, yet it can do much; that on an evidence as thorough and complete as any on which inductive science rests, it can establish the fact of the existence, and, to some extent, the character of God; and thus lay the foundation and prepare the way for that revelation which he himself

gives. It is necessary to know that nature, instead of accomplishing nothing, accomplishes much, and that what it accomplishes just furnishes the ground for a revelation to do what nature itself cannot. We thus recognise, in the *limits* assigned to natural theology, the place for a supernatural revelation to come in; we recognise, in the *extent* permitted to natural theology, the basis prepared on which a supernatural revelation proceeds.

2. But the *second* question preliminary to any inquiry into the doctrines of revelation is this: "Have we sufficient evidence of the fact, that a supernatural revelation from God has actually been given to man?" To answer this second question, there is needed a discussion no less important and extensive than did the first—this latter embracing an inquiry into the nature and grounds of the historical, miraculous, prophetic, and internal evidences of Christianity. A range of discussion so wide brings under review almost every form of unbelief known either to the older or more recent schools of infidelity. Under every variety of aspect has the question, "*Is Christianity from God?*" been raised, and has to receive a discussion and reply. Is it *possible* to prove the reality of a revelation from God? By one class—and no inconsiderable one in point of numbers—this is denied in any sense in which we assert a revelation at all. With them, a supernatural communication from God, because it is supernatural, is a thing simply impossible; and the miraculous attestation offered in support of it, for the very same reason, is no less an impossibility also. Is the historical evidence usually led in favour of Christianity *sufficient* to establish its truth? By a second class —perhaps still more numerous than the first—this is denied. The disciples of the older school of infidelity impugn the credibility of the historical records of Christianity, on the theory of imposture and fraud on the part of the original authors, and deny both the honesty of the writers and the trustworthiness of the writings. The disciples of the more modern school impugn the authority and credibility of the

narratives upon the ground of illusion and mythical representation, conceding to the founders of Christianity the credit of honesty, at the expense of depriving them of their common sense. Once more, Is the ordinary evidence offered in defence of Christianity *relevant* to prove its divine origin? By a third class—and that a popular school in the present day—this, too, is denied. In so far as that evidence is of an external character, it is held by them not only to be insufficient but irrelevant to establish a subjective belief at all; the miraculous and historical attestations can never, according to these theorists, recommend or accredit a spiritual truth to our spiritual nature; and objective proof, of whatever kind, is utterly incompetent to create a subjective faith in the soul. In so far, again, as the evidence in favour of Christianity is of an internal character, its truth is received by this class, not because it is truth from God and proved by his supernatural attestation, but only because it already commends itself to their spiritual discernment or taste, and only in so far as it does so. In short, the *possibility*, the *sufficiency*, the *relevancy* of the proof of a supernatural communication from God, are equally denied by one or other of the many schools of unbelief in the present day, who are ready to believe the thousand paradoxes of infidelity rather than the one simple truth of God.

The manifold, although contradictory, forms under which the disciples of unbelief seek to impugn and subvert all that is supernatural in Christianity, and all that is trustworthy and credible in its records, call for a more than usually earnest discussion of the proper evidences of divine revelation in the apologetic department of theology. Is there *one* class that denies the possibility of a supernatural revelation, and, for the same reason and quite as much, the possibility of those miraculous attestations by which it claims to be attested of God? It is necessary that we demonstrate that such a denial can be maintained consistently only on the principles of that atheism which acknowledges no God but nature, as witnessed in its own mechanical order, or of that pantheism which identifies

God with his own creation, and subjects him to the same necessary and unchangeable laws. Is there a *second* class that impugn the original testimony of the Scripture witnesses, as the product of dishonesty and intended fraud? It is necessary that we demonstrate that, unless we abandon or reverse the ordinary principles of human testimony, the witness of these men is true. Is there *another* class that resolve the historical narratives of Christianity into unhistoric legends, and the original declarations of its authors into mythical fables? It is necessary that we demonstrate that, taking the ordinary laws of historic evidence, their narratives are real narratives of real events, or else that the records of profane history are a forgery, and the history of the world itself a lie. Finally, is there a yet *further* class, who repudiate all other evidence for divine truth except the subjective discernment of that truth by the soul, and receive a revelation from God, only because, and in so far as it is previously revealed within their own spiritual nature? Then it is necessary to show that such a repudiation amounts to a virtual denial of any other than a subjective standard of certainty, a disavowal of an objective revelation, if not of objective truth altogether; and a substitution of man's spiritual impressions, or faith, for the infallible Word of God.

3. The *third* and last question that meets us before entering on the inquiry as to the contents of a divine revelation is this,—"Have we in our possession a complete and authoritative record of that revelation?" The answer to that question, and the discussions connected with it, form the third and last division of those preliminary topics that occupy the first year's course. It is quite possible, that, in virtue of the strength and fulness of the apologetic argument, we may be satisfied that Christianity is a supernatural communication from God, while yet we may stand in doubt either of the integrity or of the authority of the volume in which that communication is contained. We have received a supernatural revelation from God. Does the volume that contains

that revelation form a record to which we can resort as free from the intermixture of human error and weakness, and in itself an authoritative and infallible standard of truth? The answer to such an inquiry necessarily involves a discussion of the canon, the inspiration, the exclusive authority of the Word of God; and of all others is perhaps the most urgent and vital in the department of apologetic theology at the present day. Recent theories on the subject of inspiration have left us in doubt as to what, in the volume of Scripture, is the wisdom of God, and what the foolishness of man. It is not now merely the ancient form of the error that meets us in regard to the different degrees and kinds of inspiration attributed to the different parts of the Scriptures of God. But the very distinction itself between what is of God and what is of man has been done away with; the objective revelation is confounded, or, to a great extent, identified with the subjective belief; and the spiritual intuition or convictions of man are made to occupy the place, and mimic the authority, of an inspiration by God. In the same manner, recent tendencies of religious speculation and feeling have served to revive, in all its former interest and importance, the question of the sole and supreme authority of the written and inspired Word of God. On the one side, we have the claims put forth on behalf of the intellectual powers or inward intuitions of man to be the judge of truth apart from the Word and authority of God, and to receive the communications of that Word only in so far as they commend themselves to his reason or spiritual apprehensions; and, on the other side, we have dangers to the truth no less imminent. To find an infallible interpreter for the infallible Word of God; to find rest from the conflict of doubt and unbelief, without the responsibility or the pain of the exercise of private judgment and personal inquiry; to enter the haven of undisturbed faith, without passing through the storm of conflicting opinion—this is a desire at all times most natural to the human heart, and especially so in an age like the present,

of reviving earnestness in religion;—and hence an approximation to the views and tenets of the Popish Church, on the subject of ecclesiastical authority and tradition, is a state of feeling extensively prevalent in the midst of us. The question of the respective authority of reason and revelation, of Scripture and tradition, requires once more to be discussed and adjusted; and the claims of the Word of God to rule the lesser light of reason and opinion, demand again to be asserted. The *canonical authority*, the *plenary inspiration*, and the *sole supremacy* of the Scriptures, are the questions, the discussion and adjustment of which form the third and concluding portion of the first year's course of theological instruction.

II. Turning now from the topics that occupy our attention during the first year, I proceed to those subjects that are appointed for the fourth year's course of study at the hall. The transition is easy from those topics that bear on the salvation of the individual believer to those other topics that bear on the collective body of believers. In other words, at the commencement of his fourth year at the hall, the student has to pass from a theology realized and embodied in the personal faith of the Christian, to a theology realized and embodied in the existence, powers, ordinances, and government of the Christian Church. The faith given to the believer to hold for the salvation of his soul, is not a faith to be hidden within his own heart. It binds him both in spiritual and outward fellowship to his brother in the same faith; and the multitude of believing men form one society whose Head is in heaven, but all whose members on earth are both one with him, and one with each other. What is the character of this Christian society; what is its connection with Christ in heaven and his Spirit on earth; what are its relations with the world in which it is found, and to which, notwithstanding, it does not belong; what are its institutions, its laws, its outward form, and its inward authority; to what end it has been appointed, and for what purposes it exists on earth; who are its rightful office-bearers, and what are their

duties and privileges; in one word, *the Church of Christ*, in its nature, powers, ordinances, offices, and members, forms the grand subject of our investigation during the fourth year.

There are three distinct theories or systems that may be maintained in regard to the church. These systems widely differ from each other; but each of them has its own marked representatives at the present day.

1. The leading principle of the first system is, that Christ, as head of the church in heaven, has delegated in his absence his office to human substitutes on earth; and has transferred to them, from himself, in whole or in part, that authority and those powers which originally centered in his own person while here, but which he has now committed to certain men, as his representatives, for the rule, and nourishment, and edification of his church. According to this theory, in its full and legitimate development, whatever Christ himself was to the church when personally present with it on earth, that the commissioned representatives of Christ are to the church, now that he is absent in heaven; and whatever virtue or power resided in its divine Head for the life and wellbeing of the body of believers at first, the same virtue or power, in whole or in measure, is vested in his delegates for the same purposes now. Was Christ on earth the prophet of his church, for the purpose of infallibly guiding his people unto all truth? That office he has committed to certain parties as his representatives now; and independent of the inspired Word, or in combination with it, the church has still its prophet in the midst of it, a human but infallible teacher still. Was Christ on earth the priest of his church, to offer sacrifice for his people, and to stand as mediator between them and God? That office, too, he has delegated to his human representatives on earth; the church has its priests among men, who make the sacrifice and offer it to God for his people; and still has its human mediators who, in the absence of the divine one, stand between God and sinners. Was Christ on earth the king of his church, to exercise

supreme authority over it, binding the conscience of his people by his laws, and retaining or remitting sin according to his discretion? Even this trust has been transferred from himself to delegates who rule in his name amid his people on earth; and the power to bind and to loose, to condemn and to absolve, to exercise supreme authority, and to legislate for the church is still vicariously exercised in Christ's absence by his human substitutes. The unerring prophet and the infallible teaching—the real priest and the real sacrifice—the mediator, mighty to prevail with God, and the sure mediation—the supreme authority to bind the conscience, and the law to command the obedience—the power to absolve or condemn the sinner—to give pardon or to withhold—to communicate grace or to deny it—such were the offices which Christ once personally exercised on earth, and which, now that he is gone into heaven, he has delegated to the church to exercise through her office-bearers in his absence. According to this theory, carried out to its legitimate development, what Christ was himself to his people, when he sojourned with them on earth, that the church is to them now when Christ sojourns with them no longer; the visible church is, in short, the human embodiment, before the eyes of the world, of the offices and powers of its invisible Head.

2. The second theory of the church is the very opposite extreme from the first. It denies that Christ has left behind him any powers to the church or to its office-bearers similar in nature or extent to his own. It repudiates the idea that in any sense, or for any purpose, the church in its corporate capacity is his representative, or even instrument, on earth. According to this second scheme, the church is a mere voluntary association of believing men brought together by no divine appointment, but only through a community of the same character, and tenets, and views; its union being maintained upon the same principle, and for similar ends, as any other human association. The order of the church is not a matter of divine appointment, but of voluntary arrangement,

suited to the ends and convenience of the society. The power exercised by the office-bearers of the church, is not a power derived from Christ, but delegated by the other members, and necessary, as in every human society or association, for the order, the government, and proper wellbeing of the collective body. The ministers of the church are not the priestly representatives of the High Priest in heaven, repeating day by day his sacrifice, and communicating to others his grace, but simply human teachers, the virtue of whose office is derived solely from the truth they declare. The ordinances of the church are not the outward and mysterious repositories of divine grace, infallibly communicating *ex opere operato* spiritual blessings to those who make use of them, but simply becoming signs, having in themselves, and conveying to others, no virtue, except what comes from the moral character of the truths represented. In brief, according to the second theory, the Church of Christ is merely a human society, having, in its collective capacity, no power, and exercising no virtue, except what comes from union and order in any such voluntary association.

3. The third scheme or theory of the church is intermediate between the first and the second. It sets out by a denial of the fundamental principles on which both the one and the other are based. In opposition to the first-mentioned scheme of the church, it maintains that the proper offices of Christ, as head of his believing body, are personal, incommunicable, and perpetually to be exercised by himself. He has not devolved on the church, or on any parties in the church, offices and powers that once centred in himself; because, although no longer on earth, but in heaven, he still continues to occupy these offices and to exercise these powers himself personally towards his believing people. Unseen and absent in the body, Christ is still the real head of his church, no less than when he was on earth; and all the offices implied in that headship, he continues to discharge in person, and not by delegate, to his people. Prophet, priest, and king to his

people once, Christ has appointed and permitted no mortal successor to himself in these characters, and it is in vain that we look to the church now for the human administration of such offices. The visible church on earth, in short, is *not* the human embodiment of the offices and powers of its invisible Head. But, although the third scheme thus rejects the fundamental principle of the first, it does not deny that Christ, in his divine power, is actually present and operating through the church. That power, however, is not dispensed through a special class of men appointed as the substitutes of Christ, and the administrators of his offices to their fellow-men, but is conveyed directly from Christ himself through his Spirit and his Word to the soul of each man individually. The promise of the Saviour, when he ascended from the earth, was not that he should leave behind him his office and his power in the hands of human substitutes commissioned to exercise them on behalf of their fellow-men; but the promise rather was, that his Spirit should be given to abide with his people for ever. And hence the Spirit, through the church, is actually communicated to the souls of its members,—making the word, the ordinances, the office-bearers of the church, a spiritual power for the edification of Christ's believing people, as each one of them rightly uses these outward appointments of the Saviour. There is no human teacher to take the place on earth of the Prophet of the church who is in heaven; but that Prophet, by the ministry of his Spirit and Word on earth, still teaches and leads his church unto all truth. There is no human priest among us the delegate of the High Priest above; but that High Priest, through his Spirit, still seals the one sacrifice he offered upon the souls of his people, and reveals it afresh to his church in the ordinance of commemoration. There is no human ruler to take that seat of authority on earth which belongs to none but Christ the King; but that King is still in the midst of his church, ruling his people by the Spirit through his Word and his ordinances. In short, according to this third scheme of the church,

that church is not the residence of men on whom Christ has devolved his mediatorial office and work, but rather is the residence of the Spirit through whom Christ himself still personally discharges them to his people. The Spirit dwells in the church; and because He does so, the church, in all its ordinances, becomes a living and spiritual power in the spirits of its members.

But this third theory of the church stands opposed, not only to the first, but also to the second-mentioned scheme. It repudiates the system that would describe the church as a merely voluntary association, deriving its powers and its virtue solely from the union and order common to it with any other voluntary association. The virtue of the Church of Christ lies not in the strength of any human union, but in the strength of the Spirit that is united to it. The powers of the church are not derived from any voluntary compact or arrangement among its members, but from the divine appointment at first and the divine Spirit indwelling in them now. The society of the church is not a mere voluntary communion of believing men holding fellowship with each other; but, in addition to this, is the communion of all of them with each other through the Holy Ghost. The divine appointment at first, and the indwelling of the Spirit in the church ever after, make its nature, its ordinances, its powers, and endowments, far different from any that are found in a merely human and voluntary society.

In which of these different systems, or in what modification of all or any of them, are the principles and features of the true Church of Christ to be found? The answer to that question embraces a wide discussion, and involves some of the most difficult and delicate, as well as important, controversies within the whole range of theology. The consideration and right adjustment of these questions await the student, and will tax his energies during the studies of the fourth and concluding year at this hall. In the *first* place, What is the true nature of the Church of Christ?—an embodiment of

Christ himself on earth, with his peculiar and supreme powers; or a simple voluntary and private association, with no powers at all? or rather, is it a spiritual society in which the Spirit dwells, constituting it a living and spiritual power to the hearts of believers? In the *second* place, What is the nature, extent, and limits of church power? Is it a power in the hands of any party, ecclesiastical or spiritual, absolute and uncontrolled over the consciences and obedience of men—the authority of Christ himself, in short, over his followers? or, is it no power at all, except that yielded by consent of other men, and exercised over them in consequence of a voluntary arrangement on their part? or, finally, is it a power derived, indeed, from Christ, but subordinate to his law, and limited by the purchased liberties of his people? In the *third* place, What are the matters in regard to which such power may be exerted or administered? Is it in regard to the doctrine, the ordinances, the discipline of the church? to declare another gospel than Christ has revealed, or other ordinances and rites and ceremonies which Christ has not instituted, or new laws which Christ has not enacted? or rather, in subordination to his recorded appointment, and strictly within the limits of it, ministerially to publish the faith he has taught, and to administer the ordinances he has blessed, and to execute the laws he has promulgated? In the *fourth* place, Who are the parties in the church ordained to wield this mysterious power, and to administer Christ's authority in his house? Is it one man, his vicar on earth, standing alone in his stead, and wielding power singly in his name? is it a privileged hierarchy bearing a transmitted commission from him, and vested with priestly grace in consequence? or is it, in the first instance, the body corporate of his church to which this trust has been committed, and only, in the second instance, a college of presbyters, equal in office and in place, and themselves the servants of all? In the *fifth* and last place, What are the special duties of those to whom the power and authority of the church have been communicated? Is their office a lord-

ship over God's heritage? or is it for the work of the ministry and the edifying of the body of Christ? Such are the questions—arduous, important, and intricate—which must abide discussion and reply, during that course of theology appointed for the fourth year at our hall.

Need I say that such questions involve, in their discussion and adjustment, no points merely of abstract speculation or fruitless casuistry, but topics of the deepest and most vital practical importance, more especially in present times. Upon the answer to the question—"In which of the different church systems already mentioned, or in what modification of the principles fundamental to each, are we to recognise and own the true church of the Redeemer?"—consequences of the most tremendous import to the religious and even civil wellbeing of nations are suspended. Adopt the one of these systems, and follow it out to its legitimate consequences, and you must be contented to own a church that sits on earth in the place of Christ, as if it were Christ, wearing his crown and arrogating his claims—in its power, overshadowing the kingdoms of this world, and exercising a spiritual tyranny over the consciences, and even a strange usurpation over the civil liberties of men—in its ordinances, practising a cheat upon the souls of its disciples by the charm of sacramental grace and priestly ministrations—in its government, claiming a lordship over God's heritage, instead of being a servant unto the least of all—and in its practical tendencies, an institute for the destruction and not the edification of the flock. Or, adopt the second of these systems, and you have a church in name but not in reality—evacuated of all its power and virtue as an appointment of God—smitten with the curse of Canaan, and made a servant of servants unto men; having ordinances but the shadow of divine things, and without a divine blessing—professing to stand and to minister in the name of Jesus, yet unsent and unrecognised and unblessed by him. This is no abstract and fruitless speculation, divorced from all present and practical interest. On the con-

trary, under the name of a church system, and the disguise of church principles, there are signs in heaven and on earth that tell of the revival amongst us, at the present day, of a power weighty for weal or for wo, both to the religious interests and the civil liberties of our land. The spiritual tendencies of the age, and the prevalent errors now abroad on church questions, too ominously speak of threatened danger and coming trial to the truth of God. This controversy is even now *the grand controversy* of the day. And have Scotland, and the Church of Scotland, no special place and no peculiar duty in the conflict that seems even at this hour about to be commenced? The memory of other days, and the history of the trials and triumphs formerly assigned to our church, may well teach us that we have. The controversy of the church, and the sore contending for her rights and liberties and power, is one peculiar to Scotland above other nations and churches. It has been maintained, and the argument asserted by all the worthies of the first and second, and shall we say the third reformation—by Knox, and Melville, and Henderson, and Samuel Rutherford, and Baillie, and Gillespie, in former days; by M'Crie, and Thomson, and Chalmers, and others who yet remain to us, in the present. It is a controversy, the principles and arguments of which have been written by their learned and eloquent pens; and the history of which has been recorded more eloquently still in the sufferings and contendings of the Church of Scotland in the past —in the martyred blood of her godly peasants and simple maidens, shed for Christ's crown and cause. The rights and liberties of Christ's Church were maintained at the expense of suffering and death in the days of our fathers, and redeemed once more, let us humbly say, at no mean price in our own. And now, when the enemy is anew coming in like a flood, and the danger to the freedom and privileges of the Body of Christ is at once instant and great, from what quarter shall we expect deliverance to come, except from the revival in the midst of us, in all their spiritual might and virtue, of the

church principles of the Reformation—those principles which are peculiarly the inheritance of Scotland, and have been so gloriously illustrated and embodied in the history and testimony of the Free Church of our Fathers?

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

ON THE

THEOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BY JOHN DUNCAN, LL.D.,

PROFESSOR OF HEBREW AND ORIENTAL LANGUAGES, NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.

NOVEMBER 7, 1850.

THE

THEOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

As the Holy Scriptures are the source and storehouse of all true and saving knowledge of God—the subject about which Christian theology is conversant—it is of extreme importance for all who "desire the office of a bishop" to become intimately acquainted with them in those languages in which it pleased the inspiring Spirit to communicate them, by which original documents all versions and comments must be tried, all controversies in the last resort determined, and all difficulties and obscurities, as far as possible, removed.

It were desirable, therefore, that persons entering on the professional study of theology should bring with them an intimate, or, at least, a very competent acquaintance with the Hebrew as well as the Greek languages, that so, during their attendance at the hall, their attention might be directed to a very close and thorough investigation of some considerable portion of the divine Word, and that, drinking the healing waters directly from the inspired fountains, they might be furnished, as by one very important mean, to be able expositors of the Word to others.

This object we have not hitherto been able, in any thing like fulness, to attain, neither yet are we able. We have had it, indeed, always in our view and aim, as far as our limited time would permit; but it is hoped that arrangements will be made by which this great desideratum may be reached, and

two sessions devoted entirely to the exegesis of the Old Testament, the study of Jewish antiquities, and the acquiring of such acquaintance with the languages cognate to Hebrew, as is needful to a full and scholar-like knowledge of that ancient tongue.

Your earnest attention is, then, in the mean time, claimed to the study of the Hebrew language, and the contents of the sacred books which compose the canon of the Old Testament.

I know that it is irksome, at the period of life to which you have now attained, and when your minds have been excited and trained to employment with things, to be again sent back to the comparatively dry and irksome task of loading your memories with a new set of words. But the end gives dignity and importance to the means.

Save where an oppressed and impoverished state of the church may preclude, it is disgraceful to profess to be an expositor of a book with whose contents one is not intimately acquainted, by direct and habitual perusal in the language in which it was originally written. That we possess an admirable translation, is a blessing for which we cannot be adequately thankful; but it were base to abuse this consideration as a pillow on which sloth may repose. To be at the mercy of commentators is disgraceful; nor can any one use them with discretion and to due advantage, but he whose own acquirements entitle him to some place among their number, to the extent, at least, of being able to sift the value of their opinions, to discern the ground on which they stand, and the weight which ought to be given to them. What an amount of shallow criticism and impertinent mending of our noble, though not absolutely faultless, version, would have been avoided, if none had ventured to propose such variations till the language of the holy books had become familiar in his mouth as household words.

However well the task of translation may be accomplished, there is always, in every work of high merit, something not transfusable. To imbibe the author's meaning entire—to

catch and appropriate every shade of thought and feeling—we must be with him alone, no interpreter casting his shade between, and marring the closeness of our communing. Each word he utters—each turn of phrase—each idiomatic peculiarity, gives its shade of meaning, a force or beauty, delicate it may be, like the effect which a peculiar light casts on a landscape, yet such as we would not willingly lose.

The very sound, strange as it is at first, once become familiar, exercises a vivid power on our imagination—places us in the old times, and distant hallowed places—is rich in associations, and stamps the thought in our minds by the unvaried mark which issued from the mint of the writer's mind. And once the arduous ascent is climbed, and the free and gladsome height attained, how good is it to be there! to listen to Moses, Elias, and all the prophets! the simple beauty of the divinely-commissioned and inspired lawgiver of Israel—the varied tones of the harp of the sweet singer of Israel—the apothegms of Solomon—the majestic lays of Isaiah—the plaintive strains of Jeremiah—the terrible grandeur of Ezekiel! Here we soar far above the Aonian mount: for the human mind, with all its varied powers, is the organ merely—it is not the origin. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and destitute as this literature is of the refinements of human culture, and the persuasive words of man's wisdom, it is redolent every where with the beauties of holiness, and marked throughout with a θεοπρεπὲς, whose very simplicity infinitely transcends man's attempt at the sublime. JEHOVAH-GOD speaks, and he is his own witness. None can speak, as none can act like him.

It is to be feared, that in the present day, a tendency, which in other churches and lands has produced the most deleterious effects—I mean the denial of the inspiration and permanent authority of the Old Testament Scriptures—may begin, nay, in some quarters has begun, to show itself, in the form of at least a lamentably low estimate of the excellency

and power of these oracles of God, which were given by his inspiration, and "are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." Attempts to tear asunder the volume of the Old and that of the New Testament, cause us to shudder at their impiety and tremble at their awful effects on the souls of deluded or ignorant and unstable men, but leading us to review more closely the indissolubleness of the connection—strengthen, as a mean, our faith in the utter futility of any effort of puny man to break up, I would say not the closeness only of their relation and adhering contact, but their mutual impenetration, through the vitality of the one Spirit which pervades them, the manifestation of the one divine Spirit which inspired them. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son;" and taking together the words of the holy prophets and of the apostles of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we have not a thing of shreds and patches, but "words of the wise, which are as goads and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd."

To surrender the Old Testament is to surrender also the New, nay, virtually to deny the Messiahship of Jesus, who, by his appeal to these writings, certifies his high claims with their divine authority. "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." "Is it not written in your law, I said ye are Gods? If he called them Gods to whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God."

By these Scriptures, our Lord, who is also our pattern, having left us an example that we should follow his steps, and to whose image God hath predestinated believers in him to be conformed—by these Scriptures, he himself, being

made under the law, lived, fulfilling all righteousness. The marks of his own Messiahship, he *from them* unfolded. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

On the promises made by Jehovah, his Father, to his righteous servant, he of whom these words of a prophet are quoted by an apostle, "I will put my trust in Him," and who is thus our pattern in living by faith as well as living in obedience, was supported, when for the joy which was set before him (in the Scriptures to his humanity, as well as in the everlasting counsels, of which these are a transcript, and which lay ever patent to his omniscient divinity), he endured the cross, despising the shame. These Scriptures furnished the matter of his devotions, when the messenger of the covenant came to his temple; by them, he, the seed of the woman, bruising the head of the serpent, repelled the assaults of Satan's temptations—"It is written, it is written," and again "it is written," nothing but "it is written."

"It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The words of God are food for man, even for the Son of God as he is man, and they possess the power of supporting life in the soul of man, when he finds and eats them.

Who then, who believes in, and loves the Lord Jesus, and is solicitous that the same mind which was in him should be formed and maintained, should grow and be perfected in himself, would not shudder at the thought of admitting into his thought the least shade of derogation from the highest possible reverence for these *His* Scriptures? As we tell the Jew in the name of Jesus, that by refusing him, he virtually, and to every saving effect, denies the Messiah, and Moses, and the prophets, so we must be bold to say to the professor of Christianity, who rejects or lightly esteems the Old

Testament, that he virtually rejects Jesus of Nazareth. For to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, is to believe the concentration of both Testaments in him. "The promise which God made unto the fathers he hath fulfilled unto the children, in that he hath raised up Jesus."

It is rather a corollary from this than an entirely distinct view of the subject, to remark that low views of the Old Testament would separate us in spirit from the primitive disciples, from those who, being taught of God, were delivered from the prevailing Pharisaism, and who, feeling the burden of sin, mourned after Jehovah, waited for consolation in Israel, and recognised in Jesus the voice of the good Shepherd—of Him whom they had (taught of the Father by his Word and Spirit) learned to expect as anointed of God, to comfort all that mourned in Zion. These, amid deep searchings of heart and of Scripture, under Jehovah's eye, with strong crying and tears, and groanings unutterable of *their* spirit under the mighty working of his Spirit, had come to know, in no vague, conjectural, and dubious way, whom and what they needed, and whom and what Zion's God had promised, and so were prepared to recognise and welcome him when he came. He that is of God heareth God's words. It were a most interesting topic to go through the whole gospel, and to note how every word that Jesus spoke was adapted to the felt wants and promise-excited expectations of such waiters, who having obtained by the law the knowledge of God and the knowledge of sin, had been led, with broken and contrite hearts, to inquire and search diligently what and what manner of times the Spirit of the Messiah, which was in the prophets, did signify, when it testified before of the sufferings of the Messiah, and of the glory which should follow. Could we thus search into the heart of Nathaniel, "the Israelite, indeed, in whom there is no guile," we could not, if we be not carnal, but have the *same* spirit of faith, think meanly, I say not of the Old Testament, but of the Old Testament saints, Jews, not outwardly only, but inwardly, whose circumcision

was that of the heart in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise was not of men, but of God; nor could we be at a loss for the evidence on which he, when told that he was seen when under the fig-tree—*his soul seen* in its secret communing with God, exclaimed in the language of the second Psalm (I can scarcely doubt the subject of his exercise then and there), "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God! thou art the king of Israel." It was, no doubt, by the same means—namely, a heart-breaking, heart-reviving knowledge of God, produced by the Spirit unfolding and applying Old Testament Scripture, in connection with what he saw and heard in Jesus—that the heavenly Father revealed to Simon Bar-jona that Jesus the son of man was, according to the same second Psalm, the Christ (the anointed), the Son of the living God.

What, then, is the spirit indicated by undervaluing, or by the practical neglect of Old Testament Scripture? It is redolent of Antinomianism. Jehovah, the great and terrible God, the holy and just, the jealous, sin-avenging God, is distasteful to the carnal mind; the strictness of his requirements is inconsistent with that licentiousness, refined if not gross, which is the only liberty man's flesh knoweth; therefore, they have forsaken Jehovah, they have spurned away the Holy One of Israel, they are gone away backward. When the enemy cometh like a flood, may the Spirit of the Lord raise up a standard against him!

I would not for worlds be another kind of Christian than these holy men of old,—have a faith that excluded any element that was in theirs, especially its very root, though, blessed be God, things infinitely great and glorious have been done and recorded since, that they without us might not be made perfect, and that our faith and hope and love might grow exceedingly, according to our high privileges, living under the pentecostal dispensation of the Spirit out-poured through the crucified, risen, and exalted Saviour.

"After this way (saith Paul) which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which

are written in the law and in the prophets." The Lord grant that so may *I* and so may *you* worship and believe!

How beautifully, how satisfactorily, with what indubitable security, is our faith established on the testimony of those two witnesses—the word of promise and the word of corresponding fulfilment. How delightful to contemplate the unity of the church of God under both dispensations, the expectant and the visited—the desolate and the sought-out not forsaken—the heir, a child under tutors and governors, till the time appointed of the father, and the same heir in the fulness of time set free and rejoicing in the glorious liberty of the children of God—the first-fruits holy, and the lump also holy. "If ye be Christ's, ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." "When," says the Honourable Robert Boyle, "I listen to the accordant voice of all the holy prophets and of the apostles of our Lord and Saviour, methinks I stand in Jerusalem at our Lord's triumphant entry, and hear the multitudes of those who go before and of those who follow after, crying, 'Hosannah to the Son of David, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord to save!'"

The supreme excellency of these Scriptures is that they testify of Christ. It appears to me, that the true Christology of the Old Testament is not to be sought merely in some isolated passages, which constitute what I would call the *Christologia vulgaris*, but as the pervading element of the whole book. "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;" and though it be an error from which some of the fathers and other good men have not been free, that of twisting the letter to find a spiritual interpretation, yet I think we may venture to say, that the rule may be taken in a safe and true sense, that if Christ be there at all, he is there throughout. The passages, indeed, which, in the controversy with the Jews and others, have been selected as Messianic, are but the culminating points of the rock whose foundations lie deep in the ocean of Old Testament Scripture. The Messiah

is Theanthropos—Emmanuel, God with us; and the doctrine of the Theanthropos is the keystone of the theology and anthropology of the Old Testament. These writings teach us what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man. Their theology is not an abstract science, but practical (anthropological), teaching what "MAN is to believe concerning God." Their anthropology, not like heathen ethics, but theological, "what duty *God requires* of man." Herein is their infinite importance and solemnity, that they speak of Him with whom we have to do, or rather, He with whom we have to do speaks to us in them. The doctrine of divine law, moral and positive, did not begin with the utterance of the decalogue at Mount Sinai. The commencement of the sacred volume sweeps away at once all systems of false religion, and introduces the self-existent Creator of heaven and earth. Its brief account of the creation speedily brings us to the stupendous knowledge of the true nature and end of human being; for God said, "Let us make man in our own image, after our own likeness." "And God made man in his own image, after his own likeness"—the creature, not as others, of a simple fiat, but of a divine consultation, and possessing a dignity relatively infinite. God is an infinite spirit—holy, just, and good. Man, made in his image, is also a spirit (though finite)—holy, just, and good; but these are the properties of God's law. The law is spiritual, and the commandment holy, just, and good. Mark these three: God, man in the image of God, and the law of their relation—all in glorious and blessed unison, and the holy creature inexpressibly happy in possession of the image and favour of God. But the narrative soon proceeds to the sad account of apostasy and fall, and all that follows has relation to this altered state of things. Man alone is changed. Change is impossible in the perfections of God—change is as impossible in the law of man's relation to God as it is in the nature of God which it expresses—correlated to that nature which he imparted to man.

And yet, throughout the whole volume, we find, to our astonishment, a series of the most benevolent and friendly dealings of God toward fallen man — a people chosen of Jehovah, receiving tokens of his love, and rendering him accepted worship. But the great dilemma is, How can this possibly be? Jehovah, the God of Israel, unlike the vanities of the Gentiles—Jehovah, the living and true God—"is glorious in holiness," of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. When he loved the people, he came with a fiery law for them in his right hand, and pronounced, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." Of this God every Jew must have been ignorant who was not constrained to cry out, "I am the man." "Behold I am vile." "Who knoweth the power of thine anger?" "Who shall stand, if thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquity?" "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Still there was hope. The name of JEHOVAH was a strong tower, to which the righteous ran and was safe—that name which he proclaimed to Moses, "Jehovah, Jehovah, God, merciful and gracious," &c.,—a just God and a Saviour. But how? "He hath no pleasure in wickedness—evil shall not dwell with him—nor shall fools stand in his sight." They that are cursed of him shall be destroyed, and the curse is pronounced upon every violation of the law. The full and glorious solution of this most difficult of question is to be found only in the appearing of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Yet, in the promises made unto the fathers, the dawning Sun of righteousness cast his healing rays back along the whole dreary vista, reaching to the day when man was driven from the garden of the Lord.

I will put enmity, &c.—Sacrifice—Clothing with skins—Covenant with Noah—Covenant with Abraham—His seed—Sacrifice of Isaac—Confirmation of covenant with Isaac and Jacob—Proclamation of Jehovah's name to Moses—The angel of Jehovah, who is himself Jehovah—The whole ceremonial law—High priest—Day of atonement—Daily service

of the tabernacle—Isaiah liii.—Psalm ii., viii., xxii., lxxx., cx., &c.

The conclusion of all is, that the stupendous difficulty between the theology and anthropology finds its solution in the Theanthropos, the image of the invisible God, in whom the holy God and holy humanity are so closely united as to be one person. His obedience and sacrifice, by which he magnified the law and made it honourable, being made a curse for transgressors, redeems from the curse of the law, that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. What is very remarkable is, that darkly in comparison—though not so darkly as we are apt to suppose—as this truth was revealed to the fathers, the way into the holiest of all not yet being manifest, the Spirit of God maintained in the hearts of true Israelites a religion which, in all the subjective elements of heart-acquaintance with a holy God, love to him, broken-hearted contrition for sin, self-loathing and bewailing in his sight, hope in his mercy, joy in his salvation, rejoicing in hope of his glory, is every way, saving the dimmer view of the objective, identical with the work of God's Spirit in believers under the New Testament dispensation. This accordance with diversity is one of the most striking proofs of the divine origin of both volumes. And unspeakable is the light and the establishment which arises from the comparison and mutual elucidation of the two. The Old Testament becomes resplendently bright when the veil which is on Moses' face is taken away in Christ, and the glorious superstructure of the New Testament refers back to, and stands immovably founded on, the sure word of prophecy.

I have aimed to set forth, thus inadequately, the spirit of the doctrine of the Old Testament; but it is to be observed most carefully that its *form* is not an abstract declaration of these doctrines, but their manifestation and proof, in the indubitable facts of an historical narrative. As surely as Israel is a nation, so surely is Jehovah its God, the everlasting God,

the Creator of the ends of the earth, a self-revealing God, not by word only, but by corresponding word and work. To speak with reverence—"He whom no man hath seen at any time nor can see," has condescended to become an historical personage: all attempts to eliminate his being and operation from the Scriptural history of the Jewish people must eternally prove nugatory; the natural and the supernatural are so closely *interwoven*, and so intimately *pervade* each other, that it is utterly impossible to remove Jehovah and leave the undoubted facts of Israel's history explicable at all. "Ye are my witnesses, that I am Jehovah, and that there is none else." Taking our stand at the calling of Moses, the earliest penman of Scripture, and only glancing back at the preceding narrative, as being so connected with the subsequent as to form an absolutely inseparable whole, we behold Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, remembering the affliction of his people in Egypt, and sending a feeble outcast to announce his purpose of bringing them forth by a strong hand and a mighty arm, working signs and wonders in the land of Ham, dividing the waves of the sea when they roared—Jehovah triumphing gloriously, casting the horse and his rider into the sea, leading his ransomed in the wilderness by the pillar of cloud and of fire, raining manna from heaven, bringing water from the flinty rock, speaking the ten words in the hearing of all the people—in short, a continued series of facts, which the historian himself, the shepherd of Jehovah's people, attributes to Jehovah—and which, if they be facts at all, are evidently superhuman—can be attributed to none else.

In short, the Exodus, in its preparation, in itself, and in all the events subsequent to it, till Jehovah brought them to the borders of the sanctuary, to the inheritance which his own right hand had purchased for them, are facts for which no sufficient cause can be assigned, but the agency of that glorious Being to whose mighty hand the narrator and the inspirer of the narrative ascribes them. Jehovah works them. Jehovah announces that it is *He* who works them. He stretches out

his hand and works are done by him, which are to be admired, and like which there are no works. He who produces these supernatural works, announces his own great name, "and his mighty works declare his great name to be near." The heavens and the earth do not more clearly declare the glory of God, and the firmament show forth his handiwork, than does that people of whom he says, "This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise."

The subsequent history of Israel is in entire accordance, manifesting not only frequent supernatural interference, but also a constant particular government and providence, maintained by Israel's unseen King, the faithful God keeping covenant, watching over his people, keeping them as the apple of his eye, chastising their offences, delivering, &c. &c. —and all in accordance with the law which he gave by Moses, and the promises and threatenings wherewith it was accompanied. But the full force of the argument is not felt by merely considering these marks of divine power, as so many proofs of the truth of the doctrine, but by attending to the self-evidencing power of *the whole, viewed as a whole,* in which each part lends and receives mutual confirmation.

It is the Almighty Creator and Preserver of all things, bending creation at his will, since its laws of fixity are not *on* him but *from* him, bowing his heavens and coming down, and moving the earth at his presence. But it is not simply the Almighty Being, it is this holy, just, jealous, sin-hating, terrible, good, gracious, merciful, almighty One, ruling over the empire of matter and the empire of mind, "the God of the spirits of all flesh," the living holy God. In a word, not only a Creator, but Jehovah, Israel's own God—Jehovah glorious in holiness, doing wonders.

To manifest his continued presence in Israel, to renew the proclamation of his name, to denounce his wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness, to call for and encourage return and adherence, hope, trust, and obedience, Jehovah

raised up from time to time a series of prophets in Israel. Accordingly, the prophetic word ordinarily runs in the following circle—declaration of Jehovah's excellence, recalling to remembrance his grace and wondrous works to Israel, sharp reproofs of their apostasy and sin, threatenings of awful desolating judgments, proclamation of Jehovah's mercy and faithfulness to his covenant, to be manifested in sparing a remnant, and the announcement that finally the days would come when God would perform all the good which he had promised, would send the Deliverer to Zion to turn away iniquity from Jacob, and fill the earth with the knowledge of Jehovah.

We may, in conclusion, advert to what the Old Testament makes known of the HOLY SPIRIT and his work. Reverting for a moment to what was said before of the awful separation of man from God, produced by sin, which not only deserves ὀργή, but is in itself ἔχθρα; we may see that as salvation is of JEHOVAH and not of man, of grace and not of debt, through righteousness and not through any mutation of the law, so salvation being *in* Jehovah, the portion of the souls which he hath made, it was necessary that salvation should embrace the slaying of the enmity, the circumcision of the heart to love the Lord, a quickening of man dead in trespasses and sins to the life of God, a making him partaker of his holiness. It is thus that, in purposing, revealing, and bestowing salvation, Jehovah makes himself to be known, worshipped, sought, found, enjoyed, as triune.

JEHOVAH, Israel's Judge, Lawgiver, King. JEHOVAH-ZIDKENU, Israel's Redeemer and Saviour, who is also Jehovah's righteous servant. JEHOVAH, who sanctifieth Israel.

The mystery of the blessed trinity in the unity of God, is not indeed so clearly and fully revealed in the Old as in the New Testament, yet in it was made known this foundation of the faith, as far as was necessary for man placed under that dispensation, and as a preparation for the manifestations held in reserve for the fulness of the times, when the Messiah should come. Scarcely do we open the sacred volume of the

law, and begin to read the marvellous history of the creation, when our reverential attention is called to an Agent to whom is assigned an important office, a mysterious but benevolent operation on the mass of the world's matter. "The Spirit of God brooded on the face of the waters." As a mother bird affectionately cherishes the eggs in her nest, till the genial heat brings forth the breathing life, so the loving, fostering care of this blessed One gave to the shapeless mass the capacity of receiving all the forms of beauty, with which the hand of Jehovah invested it. Thus all the adorning of the lofty heavens, and the exquisite order of their hosts, is attributed to his skill and power, רוּחוֹ שָׁמַיִם שִׁפְרָה. By his Spirit he garnished the heavens.

But not only in the beauty of the earth, as it issued "very good" from the hand of the Creator, nor in the sublime spectacle of the heavenly hosts, have we the clearest manifestation of that blessed Spirit. We, who are in the midst of his works, and form part of them, would not so much as recognise his existence if the word of revelation did not inform us; and brief as the narrative of the creation is, it presents a most instructive record of his operation as the former of the Spirit in man. "And God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." Man, an intelligent and spiritual creature, made in the image and likeness of God, destined to maintain communion with him, which, lowly as he is, invests him with highest nobility—man, superior mainly in this to every creature here below, was thus made capable of receiving the communications of the Spirit of God, and so showing forth the glory of the Divine Spirit in a more exalted manner than it could be displayed in the material universe.

Man having fallen into the bondage of corruption, and justly incurred the curse of God, the hope of the human race was placed entirely in the faith of the great Deliverer—the seed of the woman, who was afterwards more clearly revealed as the seed of Abraham, the seed called in Isaac, the seed of David—the Messiah.

With this promise as his sole support, was wretched man driven from the garden of Eden. This promise of Jehovah's grace was a light to his feet and a lamp to his path—faint, indeed, but still a ray of the Sun of righteousness, arising with healing under his wings. A new and better hope thus introduced, the foundation was laid for a corresponding new obedience. Unbelief, therefore, the neglect, the denial, of the promise, must have been at the bottom of all that wickedness which soon pervaded the antediluvian world, and provoked JEHOVAH to bring in the waters of the flood on the world of the ungodly. But during the previous period of long-suffering, God did not leave himself without a witness. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh." Here we see two opposing principles—the flesh of man in direct opposition to the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God in direct opposition to the flesh of man;—a contest which, till it was on God's part in awful righteousness given over, was so powerful, that the flesh could not obtain its fully-developed exercise, nor an impious race fill up the measure of its iniquity, so that the wrath should come upon them to the uttermost.

When we come to the dealings of God with his chosen people, we read, that the Lord put his holy Spirit on Moses and on the seventy elders of Israel. It was this that rendered him, and them when associated with him, capable to bear the weight of the people committed to his care. Thus it was Jehovah himself alone who, by his Spirit, really presided over all the affairs of the children of Israel.

When it pleased Jehovah to erect in Israel a tabernacle for himself to dwell in, he filled with his Spirit Bezaleel the son of Hur, in wisdom for all cunning work. The Spirit of the Lord was the real builder and maker; Bezaleel but an instrument, an intelligent instrument, indeed, working by the good skill of his hands—a skill which the Spirit of the Lord, with which he was filled, diffused through all his constructive faculties.

What we learn of the skill of Bezaleel, is true equally

of the gifts of other persons, which we might be inclined to call natural, did not holy Scripture teach us the contrary. We may take, for example, the warlike courage of Samson—"The child grew, and the Lord blessed him, and the Spirit of the Lord began to move him in Mahaneh Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol." The only Saviour of Israel in the time of trouble, awakened, by the special movement of his own Spirit, the might that slumbered in the strong man's arm. So also a wicked alien, paid to curse, is constrained to bless Israel. For the sake of Israel his inheritance, the Spirit of the Lord came upon Balaam. In a word, there was nothing merely natural in Judaism, either in its constitution or its administration. Universal nature, both in it whole extent and in its minutest parts, depends on the arm of its God who rules and guides it; but within the sacred precincts of the covenant which bound together JEHOVAH the portion of Jacob, and the Lord's people his portion, the relation, the presence, the operation, are of a higher order, belonging to the covenant of grace, of redemption, of salvation, and so are *truly* supernatural. He did not so with any nation, and as for his judgments they knew them not.

We are in the wilderness. The sacred column of the cloud appears and moves before us; let us reverently follow. "He remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him? that led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? that led them through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest; so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name."—(Isa. lxiii. 11–14.) Behold the people of Jehovah—behold the servant of Jehovah, the shepherd of his flock—behold the Spirit of Jehovah which he has put upon him. Cry out and shout

thou wanderer in the desert, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by JEHOVAH, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency!"

What odours are these which embalm all the air and ravish the sense? It is the holy anointing oil, like to which none might be made, upon pain of death; and before us stands, in the beauty of holiness, a shining band of priests robed in white, and mitered kings; nor wants there prophets of the burning lips touched with a live coal from the altar. And hear that Voice of highest majesty, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm!"

But what means that unction? Surely something more precious than all the spices of Arabia is shed by ADONAI on the people which dwell under the shadow of his wings, and ascends in sweet fragrance to delight the heart of Him who is a spirit—the God of the spirits of all flesh. Thus speaks Isaiah, himself a partaker, by communication, of the unction from the Holy One, concerning Him who is, by infinite pre-eminence, the Anointed. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because JEHOVAH God hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Ah, this is the unction of internal and spiritual grace, of which the external unction was only a type and shadow, or at most a mere sacramental means of communication. "Ye shall be to me a nation of priests, a holy nation." "Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Be ye holy, for I, Jehovah, your God, am holy." "Sanctify yourselves, and be ye holy, for I am the Lord your God, and ye shall keep my statutes and do them." Such is the high calling, but where, oh where, is the sufficiency? "I am Jehovah which sanctify you."

The sun of this world shining on objects, clothes them with a brightness which they reflect. Jehovah, who is a sun

and shield, the Holy One of Israel, in the midst thereof, shining forth from the mercy-seat, fills his sanctuary, his temple, his city, his land, the hearts of his people, with the beauty of holiness.

For this, all the holy men of antiquity prayed, as for that in which their very life consisted. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not from thy sight, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me." "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit." "Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; thy spirit is good; guide me into the land of uprightness."

Correspondent were the exceeding great and precious promises: "I will pour out my Spirit unto you (fools invited to turn), I will make known my words unto you." "I will no more hide my face from them, for I will pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel." "And it shall come to pass, afterwards (in the last day), that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy," &c.

These promises had a glorious fulfilment on the day of Pentecost, and the Comforter—the faithful and true witness hath told us—shall abide with us. Let us then look at our position if we be indeed his disciples. "Remember that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands, that at that time ye were without the Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in the Messiah, Jesus, ye, who some time were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of the Messiah. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets—Jesus, the Messiah, being himself the chief corner stone." "If ye be Christ's, ye are Abraham's

seed, and heirs according to the promise." Such is the hope of our calling, and what are its corresponding duties? "Seek JEHOVAH and his strength—seek his face evermore. Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders and the judgments of his mouth. O ye seed of Abraham his servant; ye children of Jacob, his chosen! He is JEHOVAH our God; his judgments are in all the earth. He hath remembered his covenant for ever—the word which he commanded to a thousand generations—which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; and he confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant."

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

ON

EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY.

BY ALEXANDER BLACK, D.D.,

PROFESSOR OF EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY, NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.

NOVEMBER 8, 1850

EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY.

In every occupation in which we can be engaged, there must be some specific, definite object to which our efforts are directed; and that object, though the last in point of attainment, must naturally be the first in the order of contemplation, that there may be a corresponding provision and adjustment of the means by which the attainment may be most effectually made. For, in proportion to the distinctness with which the nature of the end is apprehended, and the steadiness with which it is continually kept in view, may be expected to be the success that will attend the application to the pursuit.

The great design of exegetical theology, or the study of the Scriptures in their original form, is that the mind of the student, and eventual instructor of the people in the knowledge of divine truth, may be brought into a state of close and habitual contact with the minds of the inspired writers themselves, in the first instance, by the medium of the identical expressions in which the revelation of the will of God was directly imparted to their minds, and by them committed to writing in that very form in which they received it, and in which it has been transmitted to ourselves. In this view, we have the means of receiving the divine truths into our own minds by direct communion with the minds of those who themselves received them from the primary Source of all truth; there is nothing interposed between our

minds and theirs, but the very phraseology itself in which they were divinely directed to impart the knowledge which they were appointed to convey; and as the words in which they consigned it to writing, and which we still find in the inspired documents that have been preserved safe and entire, are the very words of the Spirit of God, we are thus brought by human instrumentality into direct communion with the very Source itself of inspiration, and have thus the means of receiving the divine communication into our own minds from the pure fountain without any risk of that contamination that would unavoidably result if the reception were to take place through a variety of subordinate and successive channels of transmission.

In this process, the instrument of which we have to avail ourselves for attaining the end proposed, consists of the words that we find contained in the inspired records to which our exegetical studies are directed. Various considerations, therefore, suggest themselves respecting the way in which this instrument may be most effectually employed for the purpose in view.

The subject of language in general is one of boundless extent, for it is connected with every operation of the human mind, and with every occupation of human life. Its indispensable necessity to man, in his social capacity, is obvious; but language, or something equivalent to language, may be found to be no less involved in the solitary exercise of the powers and capacities which he possesses. In this comprehensive extent, the importance of language has been fully realized in the prominence that has been given to it among the various subjects of human investigation, and more especially in recent times; nor can this importance be unduly magnified, if we consider how close is the connection that subsists between the instrument and the end throughout the unlimited range of human occupation.

But it is in a more restricted, yet still extensive, field that we have to consider the subject of language in its reference

to the department of exegetical theology; and here, as the magnitude of the end is immeasurably greater than that of any pursuit whatever terminating in the present state of human existence, the instrument in this particular aspect of its application must be regarded as acquiring a proportional importance.

There are two general respects in which language may be viewed in connection with the operations of the mind: as an instrument of thought, and as a vehicle of thought.

If it is the case that in the former respect the mind cannot think at all—and experience proves that it cannot think to any effective purpose—but by the intervention of language, or some analogous symbol of thought, it may deserve consideration, whether from this view there may not be derived an argument in proof of the plenary verbal inspiration of Scripture in the highest sense of these terms. The doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Word of God is one of vital significance, and constitutes the very basis of sound theological study. It does, indeed, seem to involve an express contradiction, to assert that what is professedly regarded as the Word of God, can be otherwise than fully and verbally inspired; and if the minds of the inspired men could be put in possession of the inspired truths in no other way but by the intervention of the appropriate inspired terms by the medium of which the divine ideas were imparted to them, the direct plenary inspired divine authority of the very phraseology itself of the original Scriptures follows by so necessary consequence, as to be merely the statement of the same fact in a different form. This is exactly the view that the apostle Paul gives of the subject of verbal inspiration in the concluding paragraph of the second chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians—the intimate and inseparable union between the inspired spiritual ideas and the corresponding inspired spiritual words, the appropriate terms with which they were combined, and by which they were conveyed—πνευματικοῖς [λόγοις] πνευματικὰ [νοήματα] συγκρίνοντες.

Now, the great business of the student of the Scriptures is to acquire a habit of being so thoroughly and perpetually conversant with this inspired phraseology, as to be continually deriving into his mind the inspired truths imparted by this vehicle; and in order that this purpose may be accomplished in the most satisfactory manner, he must possess such a knowledge of the original languages in which the Scriptures were given by direct inspiration, as to have established in his mind an indelible association between the words of these languages, as addressed both to the ear and to the eye, and the ideas of which they are significant; he must be able to pass at once from the one to the other without the necessary intervention of any medium, just as he does in the case of his own language, or of any language with which he has become familiarly acquainted. And with respect to this matter, there are two things of which he must have evidence of the most satisfactory nature: *first*, that the words contained in the copies of the original Scriptures which he is in the habit of using, are the exact identical words that were committed to writing by the inspired men who received them from above; and, *secondly*, that the ideas which he associates with these words—the meanings of which he regards them as significant—are exactly the ideas that were associated with them by the inspired men themselves, or, generally, the sense in which they were understood by those to whom the language in question was vernacular.

In the communication of thought from one mind to another by means of language—exclusive of the expedient of natural signs or gestures—two general resources have been employed:—articulate sounds addressed to the ear, and conventional symbols represented to the eye. The distinct sounds which the human organs of speech are capable of uttering, and the human ear of discriminating, are so numerous, and susceptible of so great a variety of combinations, as to be amply sufficient for conveying the ideas that men have occasion to communicate to one another for all the purposes

of life; and it is not unlikely that, as combinations of sound, indefinite in number, do actually exist in the languages spoken by men, so every possible variety of combination may somewhere be heard, and every sound have its own signification in the language to which it belongs.

But the voice of the speaker is limited in extent to those who are within the range of hearing; and whatever that may be, it is limited in duration to the period of his own life. Nor, though the memories of those who heard him might retain for a time the substance at least of what had been spoken, could this resource be regarded as sufficiently effective for securing an exact transmission of the deposit, especially after the duration of human life began to be rapidly abridged.

It was necessary, therefore, to devise a more durable expedient for the preservation of communicated thought, exempt from the chances of alteration or of absolute loss, to which it must be exposed when entrusted to memory alone. Two conditions were necessary for this purpose; that the symbols of thought should be of such a description as to be susceptible of permanence, with a provision adapted to ensure that permanence, and that both should be sufficiently commodious for the practical purposes of life. These conditions have been fulfilled, with various degrees of success, in the various forms of written language that have existed in the world from very remote antiquity.

The origin of writing is buried in an obscurity which it would be hopeless now to attempt to dispel. It is probable that symbolical representations of the objects of thought were devised, in the first instance; and in some parts of the earth these continue to this day to be the only medium of written communication. But whatever difficulty may be supposed to have attended the invention of alphabetical characters, there is sufficient evidence that this mode of writing was in existence at a very early period in the East; and it is well known that most nations that have possessed a written language have availed themselves of the alphabetical form of writing.

The earliest references that we find to the practice of writing evidently speak of it as well known and in general use.—(Job xix. 23, 24; xxxi. 35; Exod. xvii. 14.)

The perfection of an alphabet, as applied to any particular language, would be, that it should contain a character exclusively appropriated to every distinct elementary sound in that language, and that the forms of the characters should be sufficiently different from one another to prevent all risk of confounding any of them together. If, at the same time, without infringing on this important condition, there might be some analogy of form among the characters representing the sounds uttered by the predominating action of the various organs of articulation in succession, as in the case of those groups of sounds to which the appellations of dentals, labials, linguals, palatals, gutturals, and sibilants are commonly given, such analogy might afford theoretical gratification and practical utility. How far any approximation may have been made to this ideal standard of alphabetical perfection, could be ascertained only by collecting and comparing all the alphabets of all the languages that have existed in the form of alphabetical writing, and all the various forms that the alphabetical characters of each may have assumed in the course of its existence.

Such a knowledge of the successive forms of the alphabetical characters of the languages with which the student of exegetical theology has most direct occasion to be conversant, would be useful for enabling him to form an intelligent judgment on the subject of the varieties of reading that are found in the existing manuscripts of the Scriptures.

This subject has occupied, and continues to occupy, much attention on the part of critical editors, especially of the New Testament.

Of the manuscripts known to exist, some have been, as yet, but imperfectly collated; and there is every reason to believe that there are others not yet brought to light, from the discovery and examination of which additional materials will be derived for establishing the genuine reading.

In tracing to their causes the existing variety of readings in different manuscripts, they may be all arranged under two general heads—those arising from mistakes of sight, and those arising from mistakes of hearing.

In reference to the last of these, the advantage is obvious that would result from the possession of a knowledge of the peculiarities and changes of pronunciation that have occurred in the course of the existence of the language in question.

A frequent occasion of various readings resulted from the introduction of marginal glosses into the text.

There is one useful purpose directly exegetical, to which the collections of various readings that are found in the larger critical editions of the New Testament may be applied, and particularly the glosses that have just been referred to. They show the meaning that was assigned to various passages by those who possessed the manuscripts containing these marginal annotations, and, in many cases, these may have been the meanings currently attached to these passages; so that, at any rate, they are of historical value in tracing the course of interpretation; and, in those instances in which the meaning assigned shall be found to rest on satisfactory principles, these marginal readings may be adopted as the proper exegesis of the respective passages, though they must not be permitted to intrude themselves into the text.

It would be obviously desirable to possess some knowledge of the general appearance of the handwriting of ancient manuscripts by direct inspection of the documents themselves, and to acquire some degree of familiarity with some of the more distinguished manuscripts by actual perusal. In the absence of opportunities of this kind, recourse might be had to the fac-similes that have been published of several manuscripts.

When the text has been properly adjusted by the application of the principles of emendatory criticism, the department of explanatory criticism comes next into operation in regard both to the investigation of its principles, and the

practical application of these to the interpretation of the text. Such is the natural subdivision of this department into theory and practice, to which the appellations of Hermeneutics and Exegesis are generally given. To the topics that suggest themselves under this head, only a very brief and transient allusion can be made.

How, then, shall we acquire such a knowledge of the languages in which the Scriptures were originally given, as to enable us to understand their contents ourselves, and to expound them to others?

And what satisfactory proof have we that the ideas which we are accustomed to connect with the original words, are, in very deed, the ideas which these words were intended to convey?

The answer to these inquiries will be found to be substantially the same with that which the experience of any one may enable him to give to the general question—By what process do we acquire an adequate knowledge of any language not vernacular?

If it is a living language, we may learn it by a residence in the country where it is spoken, and by catching the sounds of it by the ear, and accustoming ourselves to the utterance of them, as far as our organs of articulation may be capable of expressing them; we may, by this personal intercourse with the natives, establish the necessary association in our minds between the sounds that are uttered and the ideas which they convey, in accordance with the ordinary well-known process of induction, by which the knowledge of the meanings of the words of language is gradually acquired. And the experience of every day, in connection with all the variety of circumstances, relations, and occurrences in life, will increase in our minds the conviction that the ideas which we are in the habit of associating with the sounds are the very ideas associated with them by the natives themselves. But to acquire a mastery of the whole resources of the language, we must superadd to this personal intercourse the grammatical study of the principles of

that language, and a diligent perusal of the books in which the literature of the country is contained.

In the case of those languages that have ceased to be the general vehicle of oral and personal communication, we have no other resource but the study of such a language as it exists in the remaining written documents in which it has been preserved. But the question recurs, How shall we make our way into the meaning of these, and how shall we be sure that we have been successful in attaining it?

Now, there is an obvious necessary condition to this purpose—that, although the language in question has ceased to be spoken, there must have been, from the time when it was in actual living use down to the present time, an uninterrupted unbroken chain of communication, by which the actual knowledge of that language has been preserved and transmitted from one age to another.

In those cases in which an interruption has taken place, although the visible symbols may still remain, their meaning is shrouded in impenetrable darkness, which nothing can dispel but the discovery of a key, by the medium of some language previously known, as in the case of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, that baffled every attempt to decipher them, till a partial light was thrown upon them by means of a fragment of Greek translation that was found on the Rosetta stone.

In such a case, however, as that of the ancient Etruscan inscriptions, where no such discovery has yet been made, nothing can be discerned but the visible form of the characters, of which the meaning continues to be veiled in all its original obscurity.

But the languages with which the exegetical student has occasion to be conversant, directly or collaterally, are in a different condition, and a satisfactory knowledge of them has been transmitted to the present day.

When the Hebrew language, at least in the form in which it appears in the Old Testament Scriptures, ceased to be the medium of oral communication, it continued to be preserved

in the Scriptural readings in the synagogue, and in the private studies and the public institutions of the learned; and an eventual provision was made for securing and transmitting the very sounds of the words, by the most ample and ingenious system of visual marks that was ever devised for such a purpose.

The Greek language would seem to have possessed, in a peculiar degree, an indestructible inherent principle of vitality, that has preserved it, not only as the instrument of literary communication in almost uninterrupted continuance from the time of Homer to the present day, but even—although not uncontaminated by corruption, especially in the debasement of its barbarous pronunciation—as the vehicle of intercourse in ordinary life in the countries where it continues to be spoken.

It is useless to regret what cannot now be remedied; but one cannot help indulging the wish, that circumstances had been of such a nature, that Greek instead of Latin had been adopted at the revival of literature, as the language of literary intercourse, inasmuch as the exhaustless terminology and expansive ductility of the language would have furnished, with the utmost freedom and facility, appropriate phraseology for giving expression to every possible combination of human thought, and every possible result of human discovery.

The practical division of the department of explanatory criticism, or exegesis in its more restricted sense, may be regarded as furnishing occasion for two operations that are very closely connected together—translation and exposition.

When a competent knowledge of the original language has been acquired, the first thing that is necessary, in order to convey the meaning of the original to those unable to read it themselves, is to transfuse that meaning with literal exactness into the language of those who desire to become acquainted with it.

The investigation of the principles of translation in general, as ramifying through many of the phenomena of language and of human thought, in some of their more refined mutual

relations, is one that has yet scarcely attracted the attention that it appears to deserve. Perhaps the principal notice that has been taken of this subject, at least in more recent times, is that, which presents a singular coincidence in the views exhibited of the leading excellencies of a good translation, in the contemporary works of Dr Campbell in one of his Preliminary Dissertations, and the late Lord Woodhouselee, in his Essay on the Principles of Translation.

The practice of translation, however, is one of considerable antiquity.

From the high but well-founded estimate that the Greeks formed of their own native literature, and their disregard of the literature and even the language of other nations, except what may have been forced upon them by the necessities of political intercourse, they do not seem to have ever thought of transferring into their own language any of the writings of other nations till a comparatively late period of their existence, and chiefly under the influence of a motive beyond the range of mere secular literature, and even still of very partial and limited operation.

Among the Romans, who had to borrow much of their literature from the Greeks, the case was different, and the practice of translation among them seems to have been one of no unfrequent occurrence—principally, however, as a private exercise of studious application for personal improvement in the respective languages. Various hints are to be found on the subject, especially in the works of Cicero and Quintilian. In the case of Cicero, in particular, the practice was diligently cultivated by himself, and recommended to the imitation of his younger friends; and it is much to be regretted, that of the specimens of translation that he published, only some scattered fragments have been preserved. The *fidus interpres* and the *verbum verbo reddere* of Horace also would imply that the subject of translation, in its general practical reference at least, had its recognised place in the range of literature, and that verbal fidelity was con-

sidered as the object at which it was the duty of the translator to aim.

But by far the most numerous and important examples of translation in earlier times have been those that were prompted by the demands of religion.

The ancient accounts of the particular circumstances in which the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures originated, generally known under the title of the Septuagint, have been so encumbered with a mass of fable, that the reality has been but dimly discerned, and imperfectly brought to light, by all the researches of modern criticism.

All that is necessary for the present purpose is merely to state—what every one who studies that translation must perceive—that there is sufficient internal evidence that it could not have been the production of any one man, or any number of men acting in concert. It has every appearance of having been made in Egypt, and probably at Alexandria, and of having been produced in successive portions, at intervals perhaps of considerable length. The oldest and most carefully translated portion is that which contains the books of Moses. From a Gallic word that occurs in the translation of Joshua, it is inferred that the translation of that book must have been subsequent to the time when a bodyguard of Gauls was introduced by one of the Ptolemies; and the translation of the book of Judges, as it is found in the Alexandrian and in the Vatican manuscripts, presents such a mass of varieties of reading of so continual recurrence, as to give proof of the existence of two different translations of this book; for no frequency of transcription from one original document could have resulted in so great and perpetual discrepancy. In many other places, we find two or more translations of the same Hebrew words blended with one another; and altogether this ancient translation has come down to us in a state of so great, and probably irremediable, corruption, as to require very great caution in applying it to the criticism and elucidation of the Hebrew original.

But while it is of very doubtful authority in this particular application, to the student of the New Testament it is invaluable, as its phraseology, being founded on the genius of the Hebrew language, is of the same general description as the Hebraic-Greek of the New Testament, to the study of which it forms the best possible introduction, and as its influence can still be traced in the form in which many of the quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures were, under the guidance of divine inspiration, introduced into the New.

Similar philological advantage will also be derived by the student of the New Testament from the apocryphal books, which are written in the same peculiar phraseology, and one of which, at least, is known to have been translated from a Hebrew original no longer in existence. So marked, indeed, is the Hebrew character of the style of these apocryphal writings (unless a partial exception be made in regard to the Wisdom of Solomon, of which the phraseology has been modified by an infusion of Platonic, or, at any rate, Oriental philosophy), that it would be no very difficult matter, as has, indeed, been done more than once, to translate them into Hebrew.

Septuagint translation of Daniel superseded by that of Theodotion, both still in existence.—Fragments of other Greek translations that have escaped from the wreck of Origen's Hexapla. — Anonymous Greek translation of the Pentateuch, and a few of the other books of the Old Testament.

Peculiar value of the Peshito Syriac version of the New Testament, and of the remaining fragments of the Moeso-Gothic.

Mutilated remains of the old Latin versions, that were made before the time of Jerome, of little authority for the Old Testament, as made only from the Greek translation.

Superior value of Jerome's translation of the Old Testament, as made directly from the Hebrew original.

Translations in more recent times.

Exegetical importance of an accurate knowledge of the

principles of logic, and the cultivation of logical habits of thought, for the purpose of the correct analytical investigation of the relations of ideas conveyed by the medium of language.

Profoundly reverential feelings with which the study of the Scriptures ought to be carried on.—Only the renewed, enlightened, spiritual mind, under the teaching of the divine Spirit, competent to understand and to receive the things of the Spirit of God, unintelligible as they are to the natural man because they are spiritually discerned.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

ON

LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS.

BY THE REV. A. C. FRASER, A.M.,

PROFESSOR OF LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS, NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.

NOVEMBER 8, 1850.

LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS.

GENTLEMEN,—A lecturer who, in these times and in this country, is called to make good the claim of Philosophy to a place in the course, either of a liberal or a professional education, and whether in a national or an ecclesiastical college, may feel, I think, a perplexing pressure, on account of the number and variety, as well as the defective logical maturity of many of the themes, each of which has some claim to be selected for exposition on the occasion. The wide generalizations and extremely abstract doctrines of this department of human knowledge always require a corresponding intellectual strength and refinement, on the part of those who would rightly appreciate its place in the territories of knowledge, or its power as an instrument for educating the mind and for moulding the public opinion. At present, the active intellect of Great Britain, as well as of Western Europe and America, is teeming with the class of thoughts, which, if not themselves in rigour of speech philosophical, are at least among the suggestive occasions of the philosophical condition of mind. For the most part, indeed, this description of thought appears among us in a crude state, and, at any rate, the teacher of philosophy has no guiding chart of doctrine, corresponding, for example, to the elaborated doctrinal confessions which regulate the instruction communicated by our teachers of theology. But speculative thought, if not fruitful of many ripe results, at least gives many symptoms of a state of effervescence. The lecturer who is in the circumstances to which I have re-

ferred, needs to put forth a firm and concentrated act of intellectual force, in order with advantage to single out, and in a brief discourse work upon, some one distinct and likewise appropriate topic. The nature of his subject at all times, but especially at this time, plies him with the temptation to indulge in a dreamy, exaggerated, unpractical style of disquisition. He appears, moreover, under the disqualification for popular acceptance, that speculative philosophy is connected by only occult relations with life, or with the palpable and definite realities of the external world. Even the invisible things of religion and theology seem remote from the sphere of the philosopher's operations. His department seems still more widely apart from the stirring social questions which now bulk so largely in the public mind. Nor can it appear decked out like the physical sciences in the splendour of those inventions of mechanical and chemical art, which, in this nineteenth century, are, as by magic, transforming the surface of our planet as a place of convenient habitation for man.

But although the metaphysical and moral philosopher cannot traverse with the astronomers the immense space which is occupied by stars and planets, nor with the geologist read the records, extending backwards through an indefinite term of ages, which are printed on the crust of this globe, he may expatiate in the awful amplitude of his own thoughts among the highest generalizations of things, and meditate upon those first principles or assumptions on which all knowledge and human action rest. This view of the dignity of philosophy may almost seem to direct our contemplations, in the following course, exclusively to the lofty, untroubled regions of abstract and eternal truth, and to those high themes which hold the mind in abstraction from existing things and the shifting interests of the passing hour. Yet the habitual separation of philosophy from what is wont to sway the minds of most men is an exaggeration, as well as the exclusive concentration of interest upon physical facts and mechanical inventions. Speculation, like all besides, becomes not only void of interest but

also weak and ready to die, if its course is long kept apart from what is seen and handled, from the living experience of human events, or from those sections of knowledge which are more immediately applicable to nature and life. The picture of philosophy expiring among the superhuman or the sophistical themes of the early speculators of Greece, until she was by Socrates brought down from heaven to earth, is likely to be repeated at every time that she seeks to be enthroned at a remote and exclusive distance from the affairs of men, and from those departments of knowledge which are attractive to other tendencies of the mind than merely the love for abstract truth and very comprehensive statement.

On this occasion, I will postpone the endeavour to map out with minute accuracy the outline and chief landmarks of the region assigned to us for intellectual cultivation. The nature and ends of philosophy, and the proper provinces respectively of the logician and the metaphysician, have been a good deal argued among us of late years, and considerable progress has been made towards an adjustment of them. Instead of pursuing answers to questions of that kind, perhaps some in this audience may be more disposed to assume that the answers are already given. They may prefer to contemplate some of the considerations which occasioned the introduction of philosophical instruction into the academical course of the New College, and which may now be supposed to modify the style of that kind of instruction here, in changing the point of view from which philosophy is contemplated from a national to an ecclesiastical college. There is some novelty in the arrangement which thus associates the study of philosophy with the study of Scottish theology, which ought not to be without its influence upon either, in the future history of both among ourselves. The association may perhaps suggest the consideration of a class of questions like the following:—What, in general, is the true relation of philosophy to theology, and to a course of professional instruction in scientific theology? How far is it possible so to recon-

struct the course of academical study, as, on the one hand, more to infuse the large ideas of the philosopher into the current of Christian thought and literature, and, on the other hand, to project the reigning spirit and doctrines of Christianity among the speculations of the philosopher? Is our course of philosophy in the New College to be described in a style that is irrespective of every other section of knowledge, or is it to be throughout affected by its relation to Christian theology? What is there so special in the *philosophical* section of the course of preparatory academical training, as that it is selected from among the other parts of that course, to receive special encouragement and direction in the ecclesiastical college? And over and above the question of the expediency of converting the selection, which the founders of this college have made, into a general rule of universal application in the history of theological seminaries, is there any thing in the character of the philosophical fermentation of these times, or in the kind of philosophy which is now rising into strength among us in Great Britain, which at present appropriately associates a study of modern philosophy with a study of the contents of our Scottish confessions and the history of Christian doctrine?

These are questions, some parts of the answers to which may probably be interesting to many in this audience, on this occasion of opening a class of philosophy in a Scottish ecclesiastical college. This college includes in its institutions, along with the section devoted to *scientific and historical theology*, and the other section occupied in *biblical philology and criticism*, this third section professedly devoted to the researches and exercises of *philosophy and science*. The last is *transitional*, I suppose I may say, between the course of liberal education that is offered in the national schools and universities, and the system of professional education offered in the other departments of the New College.

In the following lecture, I do not venture to propose a series of full and sufficient answers to the questions which I

have suggested. But the questions themselves must be more or less present to my mind, when I now endeavour to give a very general indication of *what that is* which, as students of logic and metaphysics, we are about to study, and also of certain principles which may regulate the *proportion* that the different parts of a course in speculative philosophy may be expected to assume in an ecclesiastical college. At this early stage of my progress in the work which was assigned to me four years ago, I prefer to substitute to-day a statement of this kind, in place of the formal delineation of outlines of a course of logical and metaphysical science adapted to the peculiar design of the philosophical department of the New College, which might be expected from one long experienced in teaching philosophy and in searching for truth, but which I cannot yet offer without an unphilosophical presumption. Yet I may seek, in the way which I have just suggested, to incite my audience to meditate concerning that design, and its relation to the future history of Scottish theology and of opinion in the Scottish churches.

As a first step in the course of thought for which I seek to engage your minds on this occasion, let me offer a few sentences in the way of indicating very generally what that is which students of intellectual philosophy, as such, are in quest of, and which I desire, by means of the contagion of sympathy, to induce you to pursue along with me. In order to accomplish this, let me remind you of what a celebrated British thinker, who has roused many minds in modern times into a state of activity, either as disciples or antagonists, and who is himself one of the types of our "insular philosophy," has recorded concerning the chief problems which he was struggling to solve. It is now wellnigh two hundred years since a few friends, meeting in a college chamber, and discoursing on a subject very remote from the origin, reality, and limits of human knowledge, found themselves quickly at a stand, by reason of the difficulties that arose on every side. After they

had for a while puzzled themselves, without coming any nearer to a solution of the doubts which perplexed them, it was suggested by one of the party that, before they addressed themselves to researches of that kind, it was necessary for them to examine their own abilities and to take the measure of them, in order that they might determine what objects their understandings were fitted to deal with. Such, I need scarcely say, is the story of the origin of Locke's "Essay"—the great well-spring of modern philosophy in Britain. Thereafter, Locke proceeded (to use his own words) "to consider the discerning faculties of a man as they are employed about the objects they have to do with, ... to inquire into the original certainty and extent of human knowledge, together with the grounds and degrees of belief, opinion, and assent, ... to inquire into the nature of the understanding and the powers thereof—how far they reach—to what things they are in any degree proportionate—and where they fail us, . . . how far the understanding can extend its views—how far it has faculties to attain certainty—and in what cases it can only judge or guess; so that, in fine, we may learn to content ourselves with what is attainable by us in this state."

The design which is described in these passages must be prosecuted as a part of any comprehensive effort of philosophical research. The question of the origin or scientific explanation, and of the limits and degrees of human knowledge —only imperfectly answered by Locke,—again rises for solution at the present time. The encounter with it is a chief part of the business of those who study in this class. If we add to it the problem of logical form, concerning the laws by which our thoughts, and especially our reasonings, must be ordered, when we think and reason about things in a clear, distinct, and conclusive manner, together with the investigations pursued in the *Posterior Analytics* of Aristotle, in the *Novum Organum* of Bacon, and in certain recent treatises in England and France regarding the nature of science, the methods of constructing it, and the classification of the sciences, we

have in these three problems the chief intellectual work which ought to be performed in this class of philosophy.

The point of view from which these questions are contemplated has, in Great Britain, undergone several revolutions since the century of Bacon and Locke, and even since the commencement of this century. In part by means of influences imported into British opinion from Germany and France, a new style of speculation, or of intellectual struggling with the deep and abstract thoughts to which I have referred, is becoming common in the country which is honoured by its connection with these two great names. The metaphysical or psychological investigations of the Scottish school of Reid and Stewart, in which Bacon's method was applied for the detection of the original beliefs of the human mind, provided a valuable supplement to the doctrines of Locke and a conservative safeguard against the sceptical speculations of Hume. But these modest thinkers evaded or overlooked the deep questionings which philosophy has inherited from its early history in Greece and in the East. The spirit of questioning, restrained in Scotland within narrower limits, notwithstanding for a time survived. The sober speculations of the founders of the Scottish philosophy seemed, indeed, to disappear in the progress of the ingenious analysis of Dr Thomas Brown. Yet Brown's style of speculating more or less tinged the productions of many of our higher minds, and much even of our popular literature, about a quarter of a century since, or less. But the answers provided by that philosopher, and indeed the questions put by him, are not sufficient to satisfy a mind disposed to dig up the foundations of things in order to a more philosophic adjustment of what we know about them. Brown's doctrine and the Scottish appetite for metaphysics, at length declined together. The manner of thinking of which his *Lectures* may be taken for a type, is disappearing from our literature. In its place another begins to appear, better suited to the deeper and more compre-

hensive yearnings of the mind of this generation. The English, and as far as we yet have any, the Scottish philosophical public, now incline to contemplate a class of questions wider than were wont to be raised in the school of Reid, or among those who drew their inspiration from Brown. The great tide of Continental opinion and its accompanying phraseology, with its deep endeavours to find the origin and limits of actual and also of possible knowledge, and the theory of religion, including the possibility of a supernatural revelation from God, has been setting in upon Britain with a gradually augmenting force within the last twenty or fifteen years. It is now manifesting in our English literature and habits of thought the inclination to raise questions in the higher regions of religious meditation, and to demand proof for assumptions which have passed current in the theological schools of Scotland since the Reformation. Along with this, there are symptoms of a more philosophical study of the history of philosophy, stimulated by the circumstance that Scotland just now contains the most learned of living philosophers. In several quarters, we witness endeavours to analyze the nature of science, and to describe the method of constructing it. Various minds, too, are contributing the fruits of their scientific reconsideration of the formal logic of the schools, which, until speculation assumed its present phase, has been, since the rise of the "national" philosophies of modern Europe, and especially since the age of Locke, in a great measure banished from the schools of British and French thinkers. But, on the whole, the type of thought at present in fashion in this country, both in metaphysics and logic, is of foreign at least as much as of native growth. We still wait for a renewed application of our own *national* manner of thought and expression to the discussion of questions in philosophy.

But we must turn from this slight indication of the scope of speculative researches in general, and of the manner in which

they are at present pursued in Great Britain, in order that we may offer some account of the design with which they are cultivated in the New College.

There is nothing novel, I have first of all to remark, in the application to philosophical activity of what is virtually the principle of a division of labour. I do not mean to say that this principle either can or ought to be applied to the intellectual work of the thinker, as it is to the mechanical work of the artisan. It is not this gross mechanical meaning which I have, when I assert that the most effective thinkers have turned from the high endeavour to exhaust what is contained in the *idea* of speculative philosophy, into one or other of the divisions of intellectual labour. This is a result as well of the narrowness of the human intellect, as of the living interests and real things of which the philosophical sciences deal only with the forms and first principles. Certain currents of magnetic attraction, as it were, in the mental world, in thus diverting speculative philosophers into different regions of research, have altered the type of the resulting philosophy in one age or school as compared with another. They have even impressed upon the history of the "philosophical sciences," some of the characteristics of bodies of knowledge, organized not in order to gratify the question-putting tendency in all its fulness, but rather in order to satisfy some peculiar and subordinate form of that tendency, or to do some intellectual work of pressing importance at a given period, and the doing of which implies an inspection of the common province of philosophers *from a particular point of view*. As such, these philosophical "systems" may be regarded as only imperfect contributions towards an exhaustive answer to the question, which it is a function of the deep thinker in every age to put in some one of its forms.

What I have been saying may be illustrated by the introduction before you of a few specimens of systems, or fragments of systems, which have originated in the manner to which I now refer. When men, for example, were disposed to substitute

authority and learning for original thinking, Des Cartes appeared with a philosophy governed throughout all its parts by the counteractive principle, that every true philosopher must begin the work of thinking anew for himself. Again, the prevalence of prejudice, undue deference to authority, and the other *idola* of his age, seem to have influenced John Locke to the definite task of expelling from the list of recognised assumptions many propositions which had been long regarded as innate, and his chief philosophical doctrines assumed the special form of a polemic against "innate" ideas and principles, with an hypothesis to account for all human knowledge without them. At another time, the pressure of philosophical scepticism forced open a weak place in the received doctrine of human knowledge, occasioned by an unfounded conjecture concerning the manner in which the material world becomes known to us, and the Scottish philosophy of Reid appeared, having in all its proportions the stamp of a mind thinking about its own thoughts, especially in order to enunciate the real fact of external perception, and to vindicate common sense. The forms of reasoning, and words of which the meaning had been dried up, were at another time satisfying men who were content to remain in a state of intellectual divorce from what is reasoned and spoken about. Bacon appeared in order to present the world with a doctrine set in the mould of a mind seriously resolved to recover men from mere thoughts and words to things.

These illustrations represent to those who are tolerably familiar with the history of modern philosophy, how the tides of human opinion and interest, or the narrowness of the human understanding, often so concentrate the labours of philosophers upon some selected questions, out of the indefinite number which the search for the deepest foundations and most abstract laws of knowledge and belief are fitted to suggest, that the act of searching for answers to the questions which have been thus selected, places him who performs that act in a position from which the whole region of philosophy assumes a new and characteristic aspect. And even the same

question may often receive a different answer, as we desire to apply the information which is called for to one or another of the various departments of knowledge which happen to be cognate to the question.

All this may, in some measure, be applied to the attitude of philosophy in the New College, and to the somewhat peculiar views of the general field of philosophical labour which correspond to that attitude, as well as to the characteristic motives with which these studies should be pursued in this place. It is not to be desired that speculation should every where receive an inclination in the precise direction in which it is apt to be impelled here. If it did, some of its problems would perhaps receive an exaggerated, and others of them a disproportionate, measure of attention. This result may, however, with advantage follow, in a particular instance, from the design which connects philosophy with the studies of an ecclesiastical institution, and which moulds the *proportion* of its doctrine into the form most conveniently adapted to prepare the mind of the student for meditating afterwards upon a course of instruction in theology. That proportion, too, is in this age not peculiar to the philosophical students of a college chiefly intended for candidates for the ministry. There is probably no phase of philosophy which in these times receives greater prominence in the higher thought of Western Europe and America, than that which exhibits its manner of connection with theology, and the means by which theological nomenclature and literature may receive from it a new infusion of intellectual force. Is there any question, for example, which is more effectually casting deep thinkers back upon their own thoughts, and therefore along with new life giving a new direction to modern philosophy, than the alternative—to put it in an extreme form—whether philosophy should be absorbed in, and become a subordinate fact of, Christian theology, or Christian theology be absorbed in, and become a development of, philosophy? Are our intellectual cravings after the origin, limits, and scientific perfection of human

knowledge of every kind, to find their full and final satisfaction in revealed theology; or, on the other hand, are the popular religious systems only crude and premature attempts to solve philosophical problems? And if neither of these alternatives is adopted, what is the due equipoise and relation between metaphysical and scientific theology? One party would build up philosophy on the foundation of supernatural revelation and religious faith, which, irrespective of their rational evidence, are assumed to be superior to, and independent of, the questionings of reason. Philosophy is, then, merely the handmaid of theology, which is its mistress. Another party search for their religion and theology in the subjective reasonings and intuitions of the human mind. With them, theology is a stream which proceeds from the mind's own reflective attention to what is spontaneously manifested within. According as the religious element is supposed to emerge in the form of logical demonstrations or metaphysical intuitions, we have a doctrine of logical or of mystic rationalism. But is there no *via media* between the one extreme of philosophy absorbed in, and of course subordinate to, objective or dogmatic theology, and the other extreme of theology absorbed in, and therefore subordinate to, subjective or metaphysical philosophy? May we not preserve the freedom of thought and sound the depths of speculation, while in the very act of doing so we recognise that the Christian religion *transcends* every effort of human intellect? May we not find that true philosophy only discloses more that distinctively superhuman character and origin, which *extricates* Christianity from the list of mere productions of the advancing mind of man?

These are questions connected with perhaps the most powerful influence which is beginning to affect our manner of thinking in this country. The answers to them must give a set or direction to the future labours both of our speculative men and our divines. It is only recently that they have been raised in England, at least with any accompaniment of

grave interest, or with the instinctive feeling that answers to them are vitally connected, not merely with abstract philosophy, but with the current history of our religious faith. That they are becoming blended with the course of that history, cannot be doubted by any one who intelligently watches the opinion, now diffusing itself through so many active minds, and over so much popular literature in England, if not yet in Scotland, that Christianity is only a natural creation of the human mind, and the religious systèms founded on it, only imperfect and prematurely-attempted solutions of philosophical problems. Probably there is now no other existing force which is likely to operate with so considerable a modifying effect upon the old religious ideas of England, and even of Scotland, notwithstanding the more unchanging logical form and elaborate structure of the popular theology of this division of the island.

As was already remarked, Scottish philosophy itself has even already moved for the most part in a particular direction, and the movement has communicated a peculiar aspect to the view which it has given of what we may call the philosophical landscape. Our national philosophers have found the problem of the relations of the outer world of sense, and of the mental act in which that world becomes known, eminently fitted to rouse reflection. This it must be, whether we exercise the understanding in idealism, which resolves matter into mind—in materialism, which resolves mind into matter—in pantheism, which finds both in one common substance, or are content with reaching a reflective statement merely of the mystery of perception, without any endeavours to account for it. But a study of the structure of the intellectual pathway which conducts to a scientific apprehension of the revelations in which God is made known to man, is not less adapted to exercise deep, accurate, and comprehensive thought than the theory of external perception is, and it is more adapted to remind the investigator of the great moral end by which the activity of the intellect should be governed. Moreover, the

theory of our knowledge of matter, and the theory of our knowledge of the divine and supernatural, far apart as they may seem, have much in common in the series of doctrines which must be evolved, and in each there is an excellent philosophical gymnasium; and neither, in the order of our future discussions, should be contemplated to the exclusion of the other. But the series of exercises in philosophy which must be implicated in any course that receives its peculiar direction from a consideration of the scientific and historical theology which is its goal, and which is adapted to prepare the mind that explores its windings for the scientific and philosophic element in the study of religion, and for appreciating and experiencing the connection of that element with personal spirituality in the study of Christianity, needs a still more cautious preparation, and is a course less trodden, than the other series of these exercises which may appropriately be constructed as a preparation for the study of physical science, or as the reflective part of an ordinary liberal education. Yet it is a course from which he cannot shrink whose faith in Christianity is honest and intelligent.

In other circumstances, it might be appropriate as well as interesting to follow out into their systematic ramifications some of the intellectual exercises through which the young philosopher may naturally be conducted, when he thus goes to search for the origin, the limits, and the conditions of the scientific perfection of human thought and knowledge, in the direction of the border-land at which the Christian theology is parted from merely human philosophy, both logical and intuitional, and retires into the region of religious faith. But, as I have said, I must decline to offer on this occasion any formal outline of the order in which that course of exercises may be pursued. I will now mention, however, as quite miscellaneous examples, one or two, out of very many, of those stages which may be passed through, in a philosophical journey that is regulated by the principle to which I am referring. In each example, you can readily discern

how the route of the thinker conducts him to a more elevated place for the conduct of his theological investigations. I may likewise remark, that I omit in what follows any direct illustrative reference to questions concerning the scientific and historical *origin* of human knowledge, which pervade every course of philosophical instruction that is worthy of the name. These questions, indeed, carry us to many points from which the scientific evolution of Christian doctrine appears to be influenced, through all its parts, by the manner of answers which are given to them. But I must confine myself, in the following paragraph, to less ambitious illustrations.

(1.) The true religion and theology is not a web of doctrinal formulas reared by the intellectual skill of the theologian. The Christian divine is not satisfied until his doctrinal phraseology is impregnated with a living meaning, and practically adapted to the circumstances of each age, and to the varied mental experience of individuals. The business of interpretation and of comprehensive meditation upon the real meaning of the Sacred Writings, is, of course, a chief part of the life-work of a modern Christian teacher, who would diffuse the spirit of that which he professes to teach through all the ramifications of common life, and render evangelical religion the chief force in modern society. But, as an enlightened exegesis of Scripture must be prominent in the exercises of the divinity school, it corresponds with this, that the route of exercises which this class professes to provide as a preparation for it, lies through a region in which the student needs almost daily to reflect upon his own mental experience in connection with the words through which that experience receives an outward expression. The theologian must animate with an experimental meaning, drawn from self-inspection, that large portion of theological language which is significant of experimental religion, in order that his Christianity may be deep and all-embracing, and connected with the previous phases and feelings of life. But if he is a psychologist, he is already

accustomed to self-inspection. In tracing reflectively the connection between the language of his science and the mental experience of which it is the sign, the student of the human mind performs a process in analogy with that of realizing the connection between the dialect of theology and the mental experience of which so much of it is significant. I might here refer, also, to the habit of precision of thought in the use of every sort of general words, and to the power of wielding them, which should be gained by meditation in this class upon the mechanism and meaning of general language, the connotation and denotion of words, and the extension and comprehension of notions. (2.) But the scientific divine is not content with interpretation, even of the high kind to which I have referred He endeavours to construct, out of the documents which he interprets, that kind of systematic unity, formal definiteness of doctrine, and logical explanation, which the word *science* expresses. He seeks to unite theological doctrines deductively and inductively, and to study the specimens of theological science which preceding generations have left behind them. Now, a part of the task of the intellectual philosopher is an analysis of science *as such*, and of the methods of constructing it. If his course is tracked with an eye to the endeavour he must afterwards make to construct a science of theology, or to appreciate the efforts which theologians have already made to do so, he may be induced to pause to contemplate certain philosophical facts regarding the limits of man's knowledge and power of conception, which may justify a want of symmetry and exhaustiveness in a scientific system of divinity. He may thus be more prepared to estimate how and when there emerges within the sacred province a truly insoluble question concerning the relation of God to the creation in general, the nature of God's moral and providential government, the mystery of free-will and sin, and the relation of a fallen creature to God. Either in the inspiration of a book, or the regeneration of a soul, the method and conditions of theology

must, in virtue of the matter with which it deals, have certain characters peculiar to itself. The session of college in which were discussed the speculative or logical questions, about the scientific *mould* to which every section of knowledge must be fitted, as far as it is a science at all, has not been lost if, as the fruit of these discussions, the student is rendered more careful in the course of his subsequent theological studies as to how he squares the revelations of God by the narrow forms of his own thoughts and phrases, and if he is more disposed to receive the Word with the spirit and teachableness of a child. (3.) Further, the whole region of theological investigation is traversed by two great facts, each of which has a philosophical as well as a theological side. The one of these is the fact of law or uniformity; the other is the fact of freedom or liberty. I do not need to say how entirely the whole idea of a divine government in the material world, and over responsible beings, is implicated with these, nor yet how keenly scientific men, and also philosophers, are now attracted towards that point of view from which we contemplate the order and regularity of the "laws of nature," and the kind of evidence which is founded on that regularity—the nature of miracle, or the supernatural—the evidence needed to attest a miracle—the connection of the ongoing of the natural or supernatural order of events with the providence of God, so that each evolution of events may be regarded as an expression of the divine harmony, and each real contribution to physical science as an interpretation of His design, in the very literal meaning of the Baconian "*interpretatio naturae*." (4.) Moreover an account of the idea and conviction we have concerning God must involve the theologian in an investigation of certain alleged first principles of knowledge, or else he must assume these metaphysical elements of theology without any examination at all. Now, although that investigation usually tempts the theological instructor into the metaphysical province which includes *natural theology*, it also lies across the very path of the student who is travelling through speculative and ethical philo-

sophy, in the route best adapted to prepare him for the intellectual study of Christian theology. Natural theology is a province of philosophy that has been occupied, as a part of the general theory of knowledge, by the chief speculative thinkers of modern times, although in this country it has now almost lost its association with the philosophical course.

As I have suggested these miscellaneous illustrations of the manner in which the intellectual arena of the philosopher may, *without losing its philosophical character*, be converted into a preparatory gymnasium for the future theologian, I must add, that many, and perhaps the most important of the means for accomplishing that end are not of a kind which admit of very definite illustration or reduction to system. Their value depends chiefly on the practical wisdom with which they are occasionally employed by the teacher, or on the shrewdness and power of reflecting and making inferences possessed by the student. The seeds of a very profitable preparation for the scientific study of theology are plentifully scattered over the whole department of logic and metaphysics. Whether they are to issue in a good harvest of philosophers wisely trained for theology, must depend greatly on the contrivances which are invented, and on the spirit and the aptness of illustration which are incidentally introduced into the daily working of a class of this kind. Moreover, the most impressive manner of introducing religion and theological ideas, here or elsewhere, is not always attained when they are rendered extremely prominent. The most influential teachers even of morals and religion themselves, often substitute with advantage an exhibition of facts full of meaning, instead of a statement of the moral or spiritual interpretation of them; or they point a series of discussions in a direction from which (unless they are looked at in the long run, and on the whole) they seem very remote. It is surely too obvious to say, that much in a course of philosophical study may be quietly working towards the increased intellectual strength and breadth of sympathy of the future theologian, even when the word

theology, and other terms expressive of religious ideas, are not once introduced. The shortest road is not always the best. He who is taught to try at once, in its application to divinity, every intellectual movement that he practises in the gymnasium of philosophy, is not in a likely way to become a better theologian in consequence of his philosophy. Often we must work long in philosophical exercises without seeing their theological effects at all. Always we must guard against real or imagined theological effects disturbing us in the business of seeking true philosophical doctrine. A philosophy *distorted* by an anticipated dogmatic theology, is no preparation for a future course of manly, high-toned theological study.

He who traverses, in a right spirit, a course of philosophy constructed on the principle which I have indicated, should terminate it having, among other changes in his intellectual character, a deepened conviction that the thinker or the theologian, who seeks to define, demonstrate, and explain *all* that he believes, is on the road to pantheistic fatalism. The issue of a true philosophy is to disclose the horizon of mysteries by which the power of philosophising is bounded. Within that horizon he may at least learn that neither ethics nor Christian theology can be *disproved* by speculation. In this spirit, the student is naturally impelled beyond this region of speculative reason and demonstration into the province of morals, where he finds facts pressed upon him, in the ethical tendencies of our nature, which mere reasoning could never reach. And then, amid the deep disorder and darkness which reign among these ethical tendencies which he proceeds to study, he may experience an impulse which urges him to pass beyond the region of merely human and natural morality into the higher regions of religious faith and grace, in which he finds a revelation from God, addressed to our fallen race, and which contains an account of the origin and remedy of its disorders. The exposition and history of this highest, or divine philosophy, in the classes of theology, is the culminating point of the studies of this college.

In what has been said, it is pretty obviously implied, that the efforts of men in quest of the origin and limits of human knowledge, and the laws by which it must be regulated, have a powerful transforming influence not only on the religion and theology, but on the general opinion of an age. In the comprehensive thinking of the true metaphysician are the seeds of a harvest of great intellectual vigour. The successful votaries of philosophy are, if not immediately, at least in the long run, the influential men in the fluctuations of opinion. Their studies especially affect Christianity, whether we regard it as a system of doctrine or as a habit of the life. The vast generalizations and underlying truths of which philosophy is composed, pervade, in their innumerable ramifications, the foundations of the evidence and the different parts of the intellectual structure of the Christian system. To grasp them with earnestness, must either greatly diminish or greatly intensify our religious faith. Also a considerable part of the task of the scientific divine is an application of the formulas of logic to vindicate the divine origin, and to find the systematic arrangement, of what is contained in the Bible. But philosophy is not adapted merely for a conservative instrument. It may also be made an instrument of maintaining health and progress, by infusing into the study of the formularies of doctrine a spirit of intellectual activity, apart from which the affection and the will are apt to be dormant or ill-directed in religious matters, and which none who have a hearty conviction of the identity of Christianity and Truth can consistently dread. The Christian, moreover, proposes to regard every act of the understanding as due to the service of God. This surely includes the intellectual effervescence occasioned by the philosophic temper and the tendency to ask for explanations, the occurrence of which is an event so critical in the mental history of any mind.

In the hope that what has already been said has helped

to bring me to a common understanding with my audience respecting the mould in which the series of logical and metaphysical exercises should be set in this college, I will now append a few sentences concerning the chief practical arrangements by which I hope to attract those who enrol with me in the pursuit of philosophy.

There are two ways, in both of which the work associated with this chair may be conceived to be discharged. The one is indirect and indefinite. It includes the various public means, which he who holds the office may have an opportunity for using, in order to promote, in the opinion and literature of the church and country, a right discussion and adjustment of the questions which rise along the special route through the region of philosophy at which we have pointed. The other is direct and more definite. It relates to the educational machinery to be created and kept at work in the class-room.

Of the former of these means, I say nothing. But the proper, or at least the proposed, arrangements for promoting in the class-room the usefulness of this chair, is a matter to which I may be expected to refer in some detail. Yet it is one on which I must confine myself to what you may regard as vague and unpractical generalities. I do not like to describe what as yet I have hardly tried, nor to picture what may never be realized.

Hitherto the class has been assembled only one hour in each day — henceforward we propose to meet two hours daily. I hope to devote one of these hours chiefly to the delivery of the more formal lectures, including sometimes references to passages in philosophical literature. The other hour we reserve chiefly for conversations upon selected text-books, or upon the lectures; for oral and written examinations; and for criticisms upon the prescribed essays and exercises. Conversational exercises of this kind are important for rendering our class-room a place felt to be consecrated to really *social* study. I need hardly remind you, that from

the days of Socrates and Plato downwards, the dialogue has been regarded as an important instrument for communicating philosophical instruction and the philosophical spirit. It has helped to associate men in a living struggle in quest of truth and wisdom along the devious paths of speculation.

A perfect academical institution employs two orders of functionaries, or at least performs two functions. It has a body of professors and a body of tutors. It treats of what Bacon calls "parts of learning not sufficiently laboured and prosecuted," and also of what he calls "sciences already extant and invented." It exhibits the more fluctuating and progressive parts of knowledge, in order to promote their progress and adjustment. It presents also the details and more settled parts of knowledge as the foundation of a strict and accurate discipline. One of these functions we are, I suppose, expected to endeavour in some measure to perform in the hour for lecturing, and the other in the hour for conversational exercises. The oral and written lectures, and the selected passages read by me from books in the former hour, should, at any rate, convey some of the comprehensive views and wide general truths to which I am bound to introduce you. The conversations and other exercises of the second hour should help to associate the massive generalizations of philosophy with facts, and to break them down into the separate arguments on which they depend, so that each of them may be made an object of distinct regard and analysis. In a word, in the hour for lecture we should chiefly apply the intellectual telescope, and in the hour for exercises the intellectual microscope.

The use of text-books, along with my own lectures, I have already found important for sustaining the keen life which should be infused into our class-society, if it is to be really effectual for beneficially altering the minds of those who belong to it, and for providing them with solid intellectual nourishment. But we here encounter an obstacle. Those who have most deeply considered the books which

compose the literature of philosophy, in connection with the series of topics to be discussed and of exercises to be performed in a class like this, may best appreciate the difficulty —rather the impossibility—of finding any *one* book sufficiently adapted to the design of a text in speculative philosophy. This difficulty is aggravated by the peculiar direction which the philosophical studies of this college are intended to receive. The divinity classes have confessions, articles, and creeds for the basis of their dogmatic instruction. In the department of philosophy we can, at the most, only piece together selections from certain authors in ancient and modern philosophy, and these rather as a text for critical comments than as a standard of authoritative doctrine. In this way we have hitherto used select passages from the *Essay* of Locke (as a fruitful field for criticism, and also on account of its prominent historical importance), with habitual references to the philosophical works of Reid, edited by Sir William Hamilton, to other writers of the Scottish school, and to the lectures of Cousin. In the parts of the course which relate to formal logic, we have referred chiefly to the well-known popular manuals of Port Royal and of Archbishop Whately, and we have derived advantage from the lucid and scientific work on the *Laws of Thought*, by the Rev. William Thomson of Queen's College, Oxford. I have been accustomed to associate with our discussions on the nature of science, the methods of constructing it, and the field of what is sometimes called inductive logic, passages from the *Novum Organum*, with reference to the recent doctrines of Compte, Mill, and Whewell. I must add, that if the condition of the literature of philosophy is so considerable a hindrance to the convenient use of a text-book, the difficulty is aggravated, because the range of selection is narrowed, by the inadequate previous classical scholarship of so many Scottish students, and their insufficient preparation in those habits of thought and that familiarity with the structure of language, which men need before they can think the thoughts of Bacon

or Locke when reading the words in which these thoughts have been made permanent.

I have said that we cannot find, in philosophical literature, books from which the propositions which constitute a course of philosophical teaching may be conveyed ready-made to your minds. I will add, that even if we had, the mere dogmatic conveyance of new propositions into men's understandings is not teaching philosophy at all. If it conveys truth, it does not communicate the impulse which converts the *spontaneous* into the *reflective* life. That impulse, perhaps, proceeds less from mature speculations than from suggestive questions. If the pathway along which you have to tread is, in this department of the New College, still in a very unfinished state, I hope that it may, at least, carry you to a point at which your philosophical ardour may be roused, and your philosophical strength matured, by suggestions and brief summaries, to the degree of enabling you afterwards to find or construct a pathway for yourselves. In all the arrangements of the class, we seek to evoke the mental sympathy or contagion, which is apt, by the very manifestation of an earnest wrestling with the doubts and difficulties of these studies, to be communicated from one mind to another. Indeed, the word sympathy does not express the sufficient meaning. The mental world is pervaded by a kind of mystic influence. The social or sympathetic action of all adds to the intensity of the mental power of each. There is a kind of organic intellectual life in the human species, and in sections or societies of it, which influences the intellectual life of each member of the species. It is through the help of this law that we hope to see created among us here a vortex of thought, or at least a small eddy, on the great stream of human intellectual activity. Having secured that result, I am content, for a time, with what many may call meagre attainments and partial knowledge. If before you pass away into the busy society of men, bruised and broken by competing interests and low worldly aims, you have here got your minds so

infected with the love of truth and candour, and generous comprehensive principle, with high aims and aspirations (so apt to be early blighted by the chill frosts of a coming stern experience among the men and things of the everyday world), that, in after life, you can but draw fresh strength and high resolve in seeking or proclaiming eternal truth from the memory of genial hours in this early spring-time of life, then the academical mechanism which leaves behind only this result has not been constructed in vain.

In truth, we do not profess here to add a numerous assortment of new propositions to those that you already possess. We seek rather to infuse new powers and inclinations, to invest old knowledge, and the forms in which it is expressed, with a new character in your minds, to foster among you a deep sense of ignorance, and of what it is that we are and must remain ignorant of, to induce you to show, in this spirit, a manly front to intellectual difficulties, and so to gather strength for securing a real experimental feeling of the gladness of a life occupied in wrestling with them,—thus fostering the spirit of doubt and self-diffidence in association with power. The history of all philosophy is more a series of sympathetic oscillations than, like the physical sciences and arts in the last two centuries, the movements of sustained progress. It undulates rather than advances. In this respect it resembles poetry. He who writes poetry or philosophy must begin at the beginning. The deepest thoughts of metaphysics have been pondered in all ages. The Greek philosophers experienced them as much as the men of our own times. The true propositions, and the positive discoveries, which speculative philosophy contains, are not numerous, neither are the arguments by which they are reached and vindicated usually long. The power of this kind of knowledge lies, I think, more in the wide range of thought which is gained when any article of it is apprehended by the mind at all, and in the nourishment which it thus supplies to the contemplative faculty. Its

history is rather the history of highly-intensified manifestations of reflective energy, than of growing and elaborated forms of doctrinal truth. The creed which it presents contains few but massive articles. It is less with the conclusions which philosophers have reached, than with the conscious or half conscious yearnings of the illustrious series of philosophical minds that we seek to draw you into sympathy, when we ask you to engage in the study of philosophy. The six huge volumes of Brucker, or the eleven volumes of Tennemann, register an accumulation of doctrine much of which we willingly discharge from our minds, except for the sake of the illustration which it embodies of the mental craving in which it originates. If you demand a categorical summary of all that the world's professed thinkers have discovered from the period of the questionings of Thales and Anaximander, down to Hegel and Cousin, in the form of a statistical register of new propositions, the list seems scanty and of hardly appreciable importance. But who can sum up the indirect and indefinite effects upon individuals or societies of the action of the great speculative force which has in that period been turned in quest of them? The heavings of opinion which it occasions have affected the literature, laws, and civil and ecclesiastical arrangements of each age. All these are tinged by the kind of thinking about their thoughts, and about the universe in the light of that thinking, which, prevailing among speculative men, constitutes the history of human opinion a living organic growth.

One word in conclusion. We resume this our work in this session in new circumstances. We are assembled amid the halls and beneath the towers of a new building consecrated to academical purposes, which offers some evidence that in this nineteenth century that spirit which in former centuries covered Europe with universities and colleges is not yet extinct, and that even the noble monuments of Wykeham and Wolsey in the south, may have some counterpart in this

northern latitude. We have not here, it is true, the accumulated associations from the past;—and these are associations to which neither the divine nor the philosopher need be wholly indifferent. There is no link of fancy which directly connects us within these walls with the scholastic studies of a former age, as in Paris, Salamanca, Oxford, or some of the national universities of our own land. But if we have not associations with an academical past, we may, by making this the scene of a busy influential work in the present, ourselves create associations around them for the future. If not propelled from the past by an illustrious academical ancestry, we may project into the future. This, by associating with it an ideal dignity, saves the present from being vulgarized. When we enter to-day on a series of philosophical exercises, to be pursued in the direction which throughout this lecture I have been pointing at, it is well for us to remember, that, after all, neither a glorious retrospect nor the vision of a glowing prospect can infuse power into an institution which is not proving itself to be a living present force in the heart of the people, and meeting a real want of the times, by doing a work which the times really need. This, like other human institutions, may stand while there is a work in society for it to do, and while it is honestly doing the work, by truly creating and guiding opinion and wielding a moral force. But when the work is done or left undone, neither old endowments and associations, nor ecclesiastical or civil patronage and power, can make head against the great law of the universe, which either gradually or suddenly sweeps it away.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

ON

MORAL PHILOSOPHY:

ITS PROVINCE, LIMITS, AND LEADING DIVISIONS.

BY PATRICK C. MACDOUGALL,

PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY, NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.

NOVEMBER 8, 1850.

MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

EVERY science, gentlemen, and every branch of knowledge or inquiry, has or ought to have a definite field within which it expatiates, and definite ends or objects which it proposes to itself to accomplish. To mark out as distinctly as possible that province, and specify as precisely as may be those aims, is one of the earliest duties devolving on an expounder of any particular science or department. It is often, however, by no means one of the easiest, although always of primary importance to those who would enter upon a new branch of study with advantage.

Now every science, even within its proper limits, admits of being exhibited in either of two ways. The first of these may be called, and has been, the absolute or the general; while the second, in contradistinction, may be termed the relative or particular. The absolute or general may be conceived as aiming simply at the conveyance of the whole truths or informations of a science, in the order of their mutual connection and dependence. The relative or particular may be conceived of as selecting certain portions of these, for either exclusive or more prominent and special treatment, and this with a view to some use to be made of them, some ulterior end to be effected. The one is not satisfied without completeness of exhibition as a systematic whole, in addition to proof for each particular part; the other, tendering, as it should do, equally with the former, satisfactory proof of whatever it adduces or builds upon, may or may not include in its purpose the entire ex-

haustion of the truths of a given department: what it always does contemplate and include, is the application of some or all of them to some further use.

As the course of instruction in moral philosophy which I propose to deliver from this place is, in certain of its aspects, of the latter or relative sort, rather than of the absolute or merely general—but this not so much from the omission of any of the parts of the subject, as owing to the prominence to be assigned to some—in order to understand the principle on which the arrangement of the projected course proceeds, it will be necessary that we should endeavour to take in and embrace, in a single comprehensive view, the whole extent of our subject in its utmost generality—to see what that subject really is—what it is that our science precisely proposes to itself or aims at—and what inquiries it must necessarily include in order to attain that aim. The result may possibly be a conviction that, without any sacrifice either of completeness or of scientific rigour of treatment, the special prominence alluded to may be not only justified by the special requirements of my hearers, and the special connection of this chair of philosophy with an institute of theological education and ministerial accomplishment, but demanded also by the more general though concurrent consideration, of the present aspect and tendencies of philosophical speculation. It will be for others, of course, ultimately to judge of this: but meanwhile, and in any case, it were more than a sufficient gratification to be able to throw any thing of a clear and steady light on the province and aims of moral philosophy, or to succeed in showing that it has really either. The matter may call perhaps for a little attention, but it may also possibly repay some. It certainly is not unsuited to an academical audience, and I am content to postpone, in favour of its severer claims, the lighter and more popular topic of the pleasures and advantages of philosophic culture.

It is natural, then, in endeavouring to form some idea of the probable object of any branch of study, to turn first to

its very title, for some hint or intelligible indication. And how far, in this case, does the title carry us? Whether we consider the later Latin designation *philosophia moralis*, or the earlier but corresponding Greek terms, ἠθικὰ, ἠθικὴ or ἤθη, we seem to recognise at once in all the designation of a practical science, conversant with man's *habits* and *character*, for both are comprehended under the terms ἤθη and *mores*, inasmuch as habits are either external or internal, either of action or of sentiment. Man is evidently viewed and studied by it in the light of a creature formed for activity, tending to pursuit or already engaged in it—a creature whose active tendencies it is not only possible, but may be desirable and very important to regulate, to give a particular direction and set to, in order, of course, to the surer attainment thereby of some desirable end.

But what end can have been specially in the eye of this contemplation of this philosophy;—and of such value in its estimation, as to render the study of human habits, the mode of their formation, and the deliberate moulding of the entire tendencies and character for the better attainment of that end, a matter of peculiar importance? It cannot surely have designed to charge itself with the task of instructing how to form and to educate man for the attainment alike of each and of every end, whether important or insignificant—to train, for example, for every craft and occupation? No: the end for the realization of which it investigated the most appropriate conditions of discipline and training, the end in order to which it would not have scrupled even to cast the entire character anew, had that been possible, must have been an end much higher and more conspicuous; one common to mankind at large, under every diversity of condition and occupation, and one which made itself be universally felt and recognised, either more or less distinctly, as thus entitled to take precedence of, and to subordinate all particular and narrower aims. Is there any such, universally recognised as entitled always to dominate, and never

to be lost sight of? There are unquestionably two: one's general happiness or welfare, and conscious harmony with the law of one's own nature with the law of duty within the breast. Here at once emerge, and even by the force of reflections so simple as those that have just been specified, the two first great generalizations of human ends, namely, happiness and virtue. And whatever may be the *relative* rank that shall be assigned to these, or the exact nature of the relation which we may suppose to subsist between them,—whether we shall come at last to regard them, with some of the schools both ancient and modern, as at bottom one, or with others as distinct and independent, or to which soever of the two we may adjudge the precedence,—it will still, and ever in all probability, hold true, that, as these two ends did early stand out side by side to the reflective consciousness of mankind as pre-eminent, as closely related somehow, and as both mainly dependent on our own acquired temper and frame of mind, so will the discipline best fitted as a whole to ensure the attainment of either, prove at the same time very directly and efficaciously instrumental in forming also to the other, without the necessity at any time of a very exact discrimination between them, either in respect of their own nature, or of the habits and dispositions most conducive distinctively to the growth and cultivation of each.

This, then, may be set down perhaps as the first and most general notion of moral philosophy. It is that department which considers the influence exerted on individual happiness and virtue by different habitual tendencies or dispositions, and which prescribes and enforces such of these as are the most favourable. Under this, the simplest notion of its aim, it is the art or discipline which teaches the best means of compassing either of two valuable ends, the highest possible happiness, or the highest possible virtue.

But are the ends themselves perfectly well determined? Is it perfectly ascertained, or incapable of doubt, what IS universally the highest happiness possible for each individual?

Is it absolutely the same for all? and something, therefore, which it is proper for each alike to aim at? Or does it indefinitely vary with the indefinite diversity of human condition and temperament? And the same questions, it is evident, are equally applicable with reference to virtue. Is the consideration, then, and fixing of what these ends themselves are, of what *constitutes* the highest happiness, the noblest excellence and truest dignity of character, to be altogether excluded from the scope of ethical investigation? Undoubtedly not; unless what is most difficult is to be simply assumed as least needing determination. But if not, the moment that the necessity is admitted of beginning with the discussion of such questions as these, what is happiness?—what is duty, or morally incumbent?—what is virtue?—then starts up, as entitled to take precedence of the mere practical regulation of the habits with a view to those ends, a science of the ends themselves for which the habits are to be regulated—a science, in short, and a philosophy of duty, as well as a science, it may be, and a philosophy of happiness. Ancient speculation may have failed and bewildered itself in reference to both, chiefly perhaps from not prosecuting each sufficiently apart, supposing such a dependence between them that either must furnish the full explanation of the other, and from preferring generally, under this notion, for prior examination and trial, as a key to the difficulties of both, a theory of that which was truly the less worthy of preference. But the investigation of both is still open and competent, and still remains among the highest and most interesting; and if a selection is to be made, in the first instance, of either for separate and independent treatment, there can be little doubt surely that the subject of DUTY distinctly claims the preference over that of gratification, not only as being in itself a higher and more authoritative idea, but because the simple fulfilment of duty contributes really, by almost general acknowledgment, the most important element to that very happiness of which the other inquiry seeks to determine

the chief ingredients; and because, in the event of a collision, whether real or apparent, between personal enjoyment and the demand of duty, few could hesitate to pronounce which would be entitled on the spot to the higher consideration.

We have nearly reached our completed view of the scope and aim of moral philosophy, considered strictly as a department of philosophical speculation, and might almost proceed to enumerate its leading divisions. Originating in the felt practical importance of regulating the habits and dispositions, with a view to personal happiness and to the comfort of conscious self-approval, it may be conceived to have been drawn gradually upward in its regards to the consideration of the nature, the objects, and the grounds of that very peculiar sentiment of approval itself. All actions and dispositions, one's own or those of other men, are early perceived to be capable of very simple and impressive discrimination and arrangement, according as they are either right or wrong,—a capital and pervading distinction, far more promptly apprehended and more decisively applied, than any discoverable subservience of either act or habit to our general welfare. Let the word ethics or morals be supposed to denote the several propositions, rules, or precepts expressive of the sentiments and conduct exigible of every one, by the common feeling and expectation of his kind, in certain specified sets of circumstances;—then is there, or may there be, a science of this body of propositions, truths, or precepts, a science in short of ethics, and a philosophy also? The science would consist of the truths themselves, so combined and methodized as to give mutual illustration and support, and so carried up to first principles, or propositions of commanding generality, as that the particular and inferior truths should as much as possible be seen to follow from the higher as corollaries. The philosophy of the science, again, would relate to the grounds and authority of the first principles or most general and fundamental truths on which the science was made to rest, and to the legitimacy of its characteristic processes or modes of proof.

Now, in reference to the subject of ethics in particular, occasions will afterwards occur for enumerating more fully the several theoretical or speculative questions that would straightway present themselves, supposing the entire body of moral truths or doctrines to have been thus previously digested into a methodical and consistent form. At present, it is sufficient merely to mention, by way of specimen, such as these:—Is there any common mark, or property, or characteristic, by which right actions and right dispositions may be distinguished, independently of accidental difference of opinion regarding their rightness? What is it that distinctively passes in the mind, or is present to its regards, on each occasion of its pronouncing moral judgment? By what faculty or power of the mind is it that we come by moral perceptions? and what authority do these perceptions carry with them? To the last of these questions it may be necessary for us again to advert.

This then, I conceive, and this alone, which has now been described, constitutes the proper province, the exclusive business of ethics, considered strictly as a science, with, of course, a speculative function to discharge in reference to the vindication of its own principles, processes, and theory. The science and philosophy of duty, as they may well be termed, form, therefore, the central division of our course or subject; and it is carried out still farther by a division on either side—the one preparatory and psychological, the other consummative and still more purely and deeply moral, being the development of higher implications and inferences. The subject of Christian ethics, forming the proper sequel and continuation of all the preceding, constitutes the last and highest division, and completes the whole. And first, with regard to the first of these, or the psychological.

I. It is plain that to be qualified to pronounce aright upon the moral qualities of actions, we must conceive them accurately, that is, we must enter fully into the state of the agent's mind in doing or designing them. To be qualified still farther to classify

actions according to their moral resemblances, we must not only be able barely to realize in thought the feelings and motives from which they sprang, but have acquired by familiarity a delicate perception, as it were, of the finer features of these. Now, there are two ways of attaining this—of acquainting ourselves intimately with feelings, affections, passions, and of arranging systematically in our thoughts those with which we have become acquainted. One method is by attending mainly to the objects or causes by which our emotions are awakened, so as to ensure our actually experiencing the latter in their fullest strength, and our being in consequence impressed, spontaneously as it were, and without sensible effort, with their resemblances or differences. The other is by attending keenly to the nature of the feelings themselves, when they are at any time really experienced by us, or happen to be recalled in thought. The two processes, indeed, are never wholly separate, nor exclusive each of the other. But the larger share of the mind's energy and regards, which is directed in the one case towards objective contemplation, will render it probable that in that case we shall remember well only such likenesses or differences in our feelings as can be referred to some corresponding similarity or difference observable in their exciting causes or objects. In the other case, if we proceed to arrange and to classify our feelings at all, we shall be more likely to do so by their own inherent qualities, and greatly more likely to gain an insight into their intimate and essential nature. The one mode may conduct us to a fuller and more familiar experience of our different feelings and affections—as of anger, fear, resentment, shame, ambition, envy; but it will lead to no different classification of these from the ordinary one by outward exciting causes and occasions, nor to any other notion of the mind, as the subject of them, than simply as capable of existing successively in them all; the other will present the mind to its own contemplation, or to the thoughts of the psychologist, as endowed only with the smallest possible number of powers and susceptibilities, capable of originating and explaining the phe-

nomena in question. Now, either mode might answer sufficiently the purpose of the philosophical moralist, for he has to do, not with the composition of the passions, but with their character, their force, and tendency: and it may safely be presumed that the most influential of them, whether for good or ill, have long been sufficiently known to every one, under their ordinary and familiar designations. But, on the other hand, the exhibition of the springs of action according to the more strictly analytical and psychological method has this advantage, that it carries forward and continues in the pathematic department of our nature, on which moral science is more peculiarly and directly based, the same anatomical treatment which is usually applied to the cognitive faculties. The psychology of the feelings, the will, and the moral faculty, when superadded to that of the cognitive powers, should complete the psychology of our entire nature—if, indeed, any enumeration, analysis, and classification of the entire phenomena of the mind, amazingly diversified as these are, can be supposed as yet entitled to pretend, with probability, to more than the credit of some approach to completeness. Here, then, lies the boundary-line which marks off the territory of moral science from that of mental philosophy at large; and if, upon its own side of that line, and within its own region, moral science takes up and applies the same methods that had previously been employed in a different department, it is not because of any absolute necessity for doing so, in order to the attainment of its proper purposes, but for the sake of certain collateral advantages, already adverted to, but advantages too important to be lightly thrown away. Contests, also, it cannot be forgotten, have been waged incessantly on this frontier ground, respecting points of no inconsiderable subtlety, the decision of which, it has been supposed, must materially affect the settlement of certain other questions more strictly and purely ethical. Were it for no other purpose than in order to be able to judge whether, and how far, such is really the case, some entrance into the analytic

discussions of this department would, even for the moralist, be next to unavoidable. The immediate results, moreover, may more, perhaps, than repay the expenditure of some little pains in comprehending distinctly the matters at issue. Nor ought it to be overlooked besides, that it requires no more than an intelligent study of this preliminary department to gather from it some of the best fruits of philosophical culture and moral improvement. The mere habit of contemplating intelligently the mechanism of our internal frame—of marking its various susceptibilities, passions, and affections, with their mutual relations—of observing how they are severally stimulated or otherwise influenced in particular circumstances and situations, how they act and react on one another, their tendency to affect the will, and to determine the character, according to their relative strength and the particular proportions in which they are found united—such contemplations could scarcely fail even of themselves to suggest important practical directions for the better regulation of the different powers and passions, in order to the attainment of a strong, a well-balanced, and a dignified character. Much in the same way, it might be possible, for instance, to imagine a treatise on the intellectual faculties which, while it had little pretension to subtlety of analysis, or to rigorous consistency and completeness of scientific arrangement, should yet contain most important observations on the culture and discipline of the separate intellectual powers, and communicate many enlarged and practically valuable views upon the general subject. Perhaps, indeed, it may be owing in no small degree to this very circumstance—to a strong conviction, namely, of the benefit derivable, both in a moral and a philosophical point of view, from a simple inspection of our inward springs of action, and of the circumstances that tend most powerfully to influence them—that the very aim of moral philosophy has sometimes been supposed absolutely to extend no farther, and its object has been explicitly and expressly defined to be "to ascertain the general rules of a wise and virtuous con-

duct, by an examination of the principles of the human constitution and of the circumstances in which man is placed." Yet surely the act of looking in upon the mechanism of our nature in its actual workings, so as to discern the different powers in operation there, together with their relations as a system, and to be in consequence aware, perhaps, in a general way, that such or such an evolution is not quite compatible with the best condition of the whole, or is not in full harmony with the legislation of the superior principle asserting for itself the supreme control—this surely could not supersede the still higher and more strictly ethical inquiry into the principles of that asserted legislation, their consistency with themselves, the nature of the source or faculty from which they emanated, and the authority or deference which they were entitled to claim? The detailed survey and analysis of our feelings, affections, and other springs of action, can claim for themselves as such, and as a mere department of mental science, no such title and no such dignity; while yet it is true, on the other hand, that, ministers as they simply are to moral science properly so called, the study of them, teaching as it does to man the knowledge of himself, of what is most intimately present to him at every moment, and most influentially operative in the depths of his own bosom, and discovering to him the laws according to which some of the most important principles of his nature are developed and improved, tends to enlarge, and liberalize, and cultivate the understanding beyond almost any other study whatever, gives a knowledge of human nature, itself the most humanizing of all knowledges; and, while it trains to comprehensiveness of regard, to strength, acuteness, and elevation of faculty, both enables and disposes the mind to enter with ready and intelligent sympathy into whatever is most interesting to individuals or important to the welfare of societies and of the race.

Let us now turn from this first division of our subject to the third; and two remarks, in passing, on the intermediate or

second division, already generally described by us,* will appropriately usher us into this new department.

II. Among the inquiries enumerated as belonging to the philosophy of ethics was specified that into the nature of the moral faculty—in short, into its psychology. We are here reminded of the disproportionate space and importance that are apt perhaps to be given, and, as it may be thought, have actually in this country been too often given, to the questions as to the mere psychological nature of the conscience, considered as a faculty—its primary or derivative character—and, if it be derivative, the number and nature of the elements of which it is composed—questions, it may supposed, of mere curious analysis, affecting only, so to speak, the constitution and pedigree, but in no respect the reality or the authority of the great moral court or power. And undoubtedly a disproportionate space *may* be given to any inquiry, however intrinsically important, more especially provided it be allowed entirely to eclipse other questions that lie still beyond, and are themselves of equal or of greater moment. But the inquiry referred to is assuredly very far from being either a vain or an insignificant one, when directed to the ascertainment of the source of the peculiarity characteristic of conscience, namely, the essentially authoritative nature of its dictates, and the grounds of the deference due to that peculiarity. For, let but the power of moral perception be once supposed to be not simple and original, and few things could then be more important than that we should distinctly know what are its constituent elements, and what the precise history and process of their combination, in order to our being thoroughly satisfied that the same combination must always take place under every imaginable variety of circumstances, and always terminate in the necessary acquisition, by every individual, of a faculty fundamentally and constitutionally the same. And if, in addition to the probably factitious and composite nature of the moral power itself, the

* Pp. 196, 197.

feeling also of imperative obligation attending its exercises should be held to be not simple and underived, it will even become still more important that we should clearly understand the composition of the latter, in order to our being sure that it contains any thing which is really peculiar and strictly imperative—that its seemingly authoritative character is not illusory, and resolvable into the power of associations and prejudices which carry with them, properly speaking, no binding force at all.

Nor does it seem to be more than a very loose and unsatisfactory adjustment—or evasion, rather—of both these difficulties, to allege that it matters very little whether conscience and its accompanying sentiment of authority be regarded as original or derived, provided both be, in point of fact, as they are, the regular products of our nature, and of the circumstances in which we are placed; that, as these circumstances are themselves quite as much of divine appointment as is the constitution of our nature, whatever springs uniformly from both must be as much entitled to be regarded as an indication for our guidance from their common Author, as if his will had been evinced by a direct and immediate instinct impressed upon humanity, an irresistible determination to act, or to feel, or to believe in a certain manner, of which we could give no account nor vindication, but nevertheless could not possibly shake ourselves free. Such considerations, it is obvious, go but a little way towards assuring us even of the absolute universality and the necessary continuance, under all circumstances, of the power or product in question, although it should never hitherto have failed to present itself in such circumstances as have been actually tried; and they contribute literally nothing towards establishing its authoritative, obligatory character. Suppose they were sufficient to evince the constancy of the power, as one and an invariable force in human nature, and that there could be no question as to the purpose it was designed to answer, still there are in human nature various other forces, determinations, tendencies, spring-

ing quite as unequivocally from our constitution and circumstances, and of which the respective purposes are manifest, and have, moreover, been rendered ends to us for their own sakes, but not necessarily on that account supreme ends, authoritative ones, which it were *ipso facto* not allowable for us to think of traversing. Such are hunger, and thirst, and the love of repose, and various other of our desires and appetencies. Yet who would dream of their gratification being rendered obligatory by the mere fact of their being there, or even of our ability plainly to discern the end designed by nature in the bestowal of them?

Now, this is but a single illustration of the importance, once the sense of obligation attendant on moral perception has been denied to be immediate, simple, and peculiar, of considering narrowly from what other source or sources it is proposed to be derived, lest the discernible inadequacy of these should, in effect, leave moral perception without any real authority at all. And, to give but one other example, when the attendant feeling is allowed to be really peculiar, yet maintained to be neither simple nor immediate, but inexplicably gendered or evolved upon the confluence into one of several ingredients, none of which separately exhibit a trace of it—does not this, in the first place, look like asserting very much as it may suit one? and is it not, in the second, really to give up the composite and derivative nature of the peculiarity distinctive of the conscience, and to call in for explaining it a separate and original capacity after all, only that this capacity is supposed to require, in order to its being called into action, the simultaneous presentation to the mind of the several prior elements or supposed ingredients, whose combination, therefore, does not properly *form* the new feeling, but simply precede it, as its antecedent or occasion.

Finally, under this second division, it is principally with reference to the way in which they assert and vindicate this peculiarity of moral sentiment—its authoritative character, or the imperative sense of obligation attendant on moral judg-

ment—it is with reference, in a word, to the way in which they respectively secure and uphold, or, on the other hand, appear to invalidate and endanger, the reality and unchangeableness of moral distinctions, that it becomes important to review and compare the leading ethical theories or systems, both of our own and of other countries, and from the very variety of the principles employed by them, with such appearance of success, to account respectively for at least a large portion of the entire phenomena, to derive a new ground for believing in the reality and the security of the provision that has been interwoven with the human constitution for the production of convictions and sentiments which it was of paramount consequence that none of the species should fail to possess, but not by any means of equal consequence that they should, even collectively, be able either soon or thoroughly to explain.

III. But the same peculiarity of the conscience, its authoritative power, when fully fathomed in what it necessarily implies, or followed out to the inferences which it immediately draws after it, ushers us straightway into a still higher region, the third division of our theme, which may be called that of the necessary implicates and inferences of moral judgment, or of naked ethics properly so called. The conscience, as distinctively and essentially authoritative, carries in its utterances the felt force of *law;* and a law, too, of which when we inquire the sanction, as every law must have some such to be at all entitled to be called law, we speedily discover that it has not been left to rest for its enforcement on the mere taste and quality of a sentiment, however peculiar, positively commending duty to our acceptance, or on the mere smart and pungency of an opposite and more decided feeling, that follows its rejection or violation. Every one instantly feels that, were this all by which it was backed, the moral faculty would resolve itself substantially into a species of mental taste or relish, of which men might feel themselves free to refuse the gratification, provided they

were content to submit in consequence to its only sanction, a certain amount of a particular kind of pain; and even that pain itself would soon cease to be regarded—would lose, indeed, all that now renders it so truly formidable. Who can fail to see that morality, if trusted ultimately and solely to such support, must inevitably and swiftly disappear, and the sense of guilt itself vanish utterly away? There *is*, then, at all times in the background, and always more or less distinctly known to be so, another sanction. There is included in the very utterances of the moral faculty a reference to a different power; and were it not so, all worth and good, and the very sense of sin itself, had long ago died out of the world. It belongs, then, to our subject to evolve this great implicate of the existence of a God, thus given to us in a moral datum or fact—and of a God possessed of a moral nature and attributes fundamentally in accordance with the convictions of that nature which he has bestowed upon ourselves.

And there are still other implicates or inferences of the same class, scarcely less momentous or of less urgent moral interest to the human spirit—all deducible immediately from ethical facts. Thus, the sense of guilt encloses and is attended with a sense of personal amenableness or responsibility to the great moral Being by whom conscience has been set up, and of probable retribution from his hand:—if in the present life, then with the farther persuasion, that even here a moral government is certainly or probably to be found exercised by him—and if beyond, then with the ominous belief or apprehension of a coming immortality. Now, the inquiries on all these points—God, the reality of his existence, his personality, the holiness of his nature—sin, its desert in his eye, the light in which he regards a creature tainted with it—the probable fate or destiny of such a creature—retribution, immortality—these all spring most directly and inevitably out of the facts and phenomena, the wants and suggestions of our moral nature. They constitute the very problems that have ever given

its grand interest and value to the entire department, the high ends for the sake of which its speculations and researches have always been mainly prosecuted. That the phenomena of the ethical region served only to start the inquiries, but did not of themselves avail fully to resolve them, would not dispense with the duty, upon the part of the moral philosopher, to pursue them when once started, and to bring them to a close by means of evidence furnished from whatever quarter, seeing not only that they had been *obtruded* upon him in his own proper department, and been first originated there; but farther, that followed up and definitively settled they *must* be, or must be *assumed* to have been, in order to any satisfaction on moral subjects, or even to the very existence of morality in the world. It is fully competent for him, therefore, and more than merely competent, it is in a manner incumbent, to explicate these high truths, for the satisfactory accomplishment of his own special purposes, and from the premises furnished by his own science, so far as these will carry him; to supplement any deficiency in the evidence which it furnishes by additional proofs derived from any other quarter; and lastly, to examine and dispose of whatever arguments would deny, or whatever theories would evade and dispense with, his conclusions.

It may be thought, indeed, that this is virtually to set up a right to draw within the circle of ethics, at pleasure, as large a portion as one may choose, or even the whole of other separate and independent subjects—for example, natural theology—and a part also perhaps of what under a different view belongs to metaphysics or ontology, in so far as the latter deals with the questions, whether a proof be *possible* of the existence of the supersensible? of what sort that proof must be in order to be sufficient? and what the amount is of such as we do actually possess? The answer, however, obviously is, that every science or art is entitled to fetch at once from the domain of any other, and to employ in its own service, whatever fact or truth is suited

to its special purpose, subject only to the condition that the fact or truth so borrowed be acknowledged to be really such by the competent authorities in the department whence it has been taken, or that original and independent proof of its accuracy be offered, on the occasion when use is proposed to be made of it. Should the materials for a particular speculation be taken from the field or from the fruits of never so many sciences, should it even embrace the whole facts and conclusions of some, still it deals with these for a different end and to a different effect. *Their* resting-place, which was the establishment of the facts and truths themselves, is but its starting point,—what is peculiar to itself being the use and purpose to which they are turned by it. There is really no interference, so long as the one does not uselessly repeat the processes of proof, as well as the conclusions of the other, and provided, when one offers an independent proof of its own, this incidental burden has been laid on it by the absence of a generally acknowledged valid one to the same effect. And, as regards natural theology in particular, which has no separate department of nature or single class of facts for its special field, nor employs any peculiar processes of its own, but prosecutes its search alike in every different field in quest of evidence bearing on the determination of a certain number of definite questions, it would be difficult perhaps to assign a reason why its accumulations should not be held to be carried on, if under the eye and in the interest of *any* other branch, then under the eye and in the interest of moral science, which first urgently propounded to it the very problems to be solved, which always furnishes some of the most pregnant hints and most indispensable contributions towards their solution, and which is scarcely less concerned in the successful solution of the chief of them than is even revealed religion itself. Nor can there be any reason, in the present state of literature and in the aspect of our times, to apprehend any evil consequence from too frequent recurrence, in different relations, to matters so momentous, or even from repeated treatment of considerable portions of

the general subject, in appropriate connection with the special topics of each separate class.

It will have been perceived by this time, in what consists that specialty of the proposed course of instruction which has already been alluded to, and which might entitle it to be considered as in the same degree a relative and particular, rather than a merely general and absolute treatment of at least a certain portion of our subject—relative, that is, to the existing tendencies of speculative opinion, to the probable requirements of the majority of my hearers, and relative also to the more special aims of the college with which this chair is connected. The specialty consists in the higher prominence to be given, on the ground of all the preceding considerations, to certain topics, which not only pertain, however, at all times legitimately to the department, but are, moreover, entitled to be considered as forming always the culminating points, the last and highest summits of the science. Not that it is in any way intended, in compliance with temporary circumstances, or in deference to the interest of a present excitement on subjects somewhat connected with ours, in the very least to lower or dilute the most rigorous mode or standard of discussion that could be contended for as proper to our own. There is, in the nature of the case itself, no reason whatever for apprehending such a result, nor do we feel that we are peculiarly exposed (if we at all know ourselves), to the danger or the temptation of either betraying or lowering, by any unworthy compliance, the strictly independent study of mental or of moral science. We are firmly persuaded, on the contrary, both that there is such a distinct and independent study, and that, for the interests of revealed religion itself, it is of the greatest consequence that it be seen and allowed to be so. For, be its defects and its shortcomings what they may, still in the demonstration of the divine existence, to which it essentially contributes, and in the evidence of the moral nature of the Deity, which it may almost be said exclusively to supply, it furnishes the grand basis, and fulfils

the prime conditions indispensably necessary, in order to the possibility of a valid external proof of Revelation, grounded even on miraculous attestations. We cannot see how the service which it even in this single respect renders, could either be wholly dispensed with, or be rendered from any other source. Its use and functions, therefore, however limited they may be held to be, and however separately feeble or even powerless for the great practical purposes of effective moral elevation, or abiding satisfaction of spirit on many questions of profoundest interest and of paramount urgency, cannot, without serious risk, be utterly disclaimed and repudiated. Yet why, on the other hand, should those who firmly claim for it a sphere at once legitimate and important, but who look nevertheless earnestly for the regeneration of the species, and the renovation of each of its members—for the medicating of the ills of universal society, and the healing of the deep-seated malady of each individual spirit, to a quarter wholly different, even to that spiritual Christianity which is now the hope of the world—why should any one who has this hope in him hesitate, whatever be his position, or his profession, or his chosen walk of contemplation or of labour, with glad but humble confidence to make undisguised avowal of his faith? or how rather could it be thought, that in such days especially as we are fallen upon, any one could, with conscious loyalty and honour, consider himself at liberty for a moment to do otherwise? And this it is accordingly, and this alone, that in our special circumstances constrains from me the avowal, that in the treatment of my particular subject, and the discussion of the various themes that await us, while altogether indisposed and unable to make gratuitous and unrequired sacrifice of the moral reason even on the altar of faith, or to give up the claims of man's moral nature to a separate and intelligent scrutiny, with the possibility, at least, of sound and valuable results,—convinced, that although it may not be possible to make out the entire plan of human nature amidst the disorder which has come upon it,

yet somewhat, and even much of the original outline it *is* still given to us to decipher; believing, too, that the evidences of a divine adaptation between the remedial provisions of a healing economy on the one hand, and the constitution, wants, aspirations, and forebodings of a fallen nature on the other, will best be evolved and appreciated by a consideration of each, in the first instance, and to a large extent, separate and independent; and yet holding, in perfect consistency with this, the inadequacy of nature's strength to do much more for effectually bettering its own condition, than attain to a profounder sense of its helplessness, and authenticate, or recognise as validly authenticated and commissioned, a Greater than nature, who offers to undertake the effective treatment of its malady—I should indeed account it a valuable consummation and result of all our labours, if we could so survey our own special territory, as intelligently to perceive and deeply to feel in how many momentous respects it is (to use the happy language of a great master, himself but just gone up from the solemn survey) a science "far more of desiderata than of dicta"—could so walk its shaded margin, as to discern the gaps that break ever and anon the continuity of its outline, and mark the points at which it seems to stretch ominously away from us, and be lost in the unknown; if, in one word, the great original LAW of all created intelligences should prove, in our study of its dread characters, as traceable even on the darkened tablet of our hearts, in any measure a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.

No time is left us for entering on the subject of Christian Ethics, the fourth and concluding division of the course.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

ON

NATURAL SCIENCE.

BY JOHN FLEMING, D.D.,

PROFESSOR OF NATURAL SCIENCE, NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.

NOVEMBER 8, 1850.

NATURAL SCIENCE.

If there be any class in the New College requiring, in an especial manner, that its nature and objects be explained to an audience interested in the institution, it is the one connected with the chair which I have the privilege of filling. The very title seems to be so imperfectly understood, that I have been gravely asked by respected and intelligent individuals, *what was meant by natural science?* Even in works of high pretenions, natural science and physical science are spoken of as one and the same. Suffer me to say, that the difference is great, and the distinguishing marks obvious.

In *physical science*, the attention is occupied with the conditions of rest and motion in solid, liquid, and gaseous bodies, or masses, and in those which have been termed imponderables. These branches of knowledge are usually referred to under the terms *statics* and *dynamics*. In *natural science*, on the other hand, the inquirer is directed to the conditions of aggregation in inorganic and organized masses, preparatory to the investigations of the properties or functions connected with form and structure, the results of which embrace all that may be considered as the philosophy of the subject.

While our peculiar department has been confounded with physical science, it has been more frequently regarded as identical with natural history. But, under the title of natural history, the public has been so much accustomed to contemplate the results of *observation* apart from *experimental*

research, as to justify the definition of this branch of knowledge as the history of the resemblances and differences, or of the external characters, of inorganic and organized beings. When, along with a knowledge of these external appearances, we endeavour to combine an acquaintance with the peculiar structure and specific functions which the scalpel and the microscope can unfold, in connection with careful observation, we are entering the domain of natural science, and witnessing natural history embraced in the enclosure.

There were many circumstances which, in their different bearings, co-operated in exciting the Free Church to add a class of natural science to her theological institute. Towards the close of last century, the geological doctrines of Hutton had taken as deep root in the public mind as the metaphysics of Hume. There was excellence in both, but the defects were many and dangerous. Hutton, profoundly ignorant of the truths of paleontology, as then determined, could see in the crust of the earth nothing but endless disintegration and depression, with renewed consolidation and elevation, and fancied he looked on a system in which there were no proofs of a beginning, and no prospect of an end, no evidence of creative power, and consequently but faint traces of presiding wisdom or benevolent purpose.

Subsequent to the rise of this Scottish geology of Hutton, the German geology of Werner was introduced, and for a while appeared to triumph. This system, equally indifferent to the truths of paleontology, and outraging all philosophy by the extravagance of its assumptions, paved the way for those reveries of progressive development with which of late years we have been inundated. In Jameson's "Geognosy," it is stated, in reference to organic remains, "Those which occur in the earliest periods belong to the lowest and most imperfect class of animals, the zoophytes. In the newer and newer formations, we meet with quantities of shells and fish, and these are accompanied by a variety of marine plants." "Land plants appear later, and land animals still later."

"During the period when the earth was still covered to a great height with water, neither plants nor animals had been created. When the water diminished in height, and the dry land began to appear, marine plants, and the lowest and most imperfect animals were created. As the water diminished, it appears to have become gradually more fitted for the support of animals and vegetables, as we find them increasing in number, variety, and perfection, and approaching more to the nature of those in the present seas, the lower the level of the outgoings of the strata, or, what is the same thing, the lower the level of the water. The same gradual increase of organic beings appears to have taken place on the dry land."—Pp. 80, 82.

The popular work termed "Cuvier's Theory of the Earth," made its appearance in 1813, under the countenance of the distinguished professor of natural history in the University of Edinburgh. In this work, science, falsely so called, and revelation, appeared in antagonism. Cuvier assigned to the intercourse which Moses had with the Egyptians, the origin of all the knowledge which he possessed and has recorded concerning the Creation and the Deluge; while he does not consider the *ark* as the vessel of safety, where all of the human family that escaped the catastrophe found a refuge. Yet this work, decidedly antiscriptural in many of its bearings, was inconsiderately recommended by Professor Jameson, as calculated "to fix the attention of naturalists on a new series of facts, to admonish the sceptic, and afford the highest pleasure to those who delight in illustrating the truth of the Sacred Writings by an appeal to the facts and reasonings of natural history."

The appearance of the work termed "The Vestiges of the Creation," did not, at the first, excite any great amount of interest, even with the extraordinary effort to give it publicity which was resorted to, by the unusual distribution of *separate copies*, to distinguished individuals, and others. The reading public were, in a great measure, ignorant of all the foundations

of the reasonings employed. A few considered the work as bearing much the same relation to geology as the novels of Scott did to history—a strange hodge-podge of fact and fiction, which they were incompetent to eliminate. Too many, alas! did not understand the character of the work, considering it harmless; and even clergymen recommended its perusal to students of divinity, in the belief that it was a fair exposition of geological opinions. Nor can we wonder at this. In the only scientific periodical in Scotland, *The Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal*, conducted by Professor Jameson, this work was noticed in the following laudatory terms:—"Although we do not agree with the ingenuous author of this interesting volume in several of his speculations, yet we can safely recommend it to the attention of our readers, who will perceive, from the subjoined table of contents, that the subjects discussed are of an attractive kind."—*January* 1845, p. 180, No. 75.

Even after the demolition of the whole of this visionary fabric, by Sir David Brewster in the *North British Review*, and by Professor Sedgwick in the *Edinburgh Review*, the author of the "Vestiges" thought proper to send forth an "*Explanation*," indicating too plainly his incompetency to deal with the subject which he ventured to discuss.* Yet again we have the same *Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal* declaring:—"These 'Explanations' sufficiently prove that the author has met with great effect the arguments of his distinguished opponents!"—*April* 1846, p. 400.

The few individuals who deliberately and intelligently looked on the tendency of these crude generalizations from imperfect or misunderstood data, as fostering errors of a very dangerous kind, perceived the necessity of introducing an acquaintance with the truths of natural science into the theo-

* The reader, if interested in the important subjects here referred to—and who can fail to be interested?—would find a rich repast in "A Discourse on the Studies of the University of Cambridge." Fifth Edition. By Professor Sedgwick. 1850.

logical curriculum of the Free Church. The subject was, accordingly, brought under the consideration of the General Assembly in May 1845, and the chair was constituted, unanimously, by the Assembly which met at Inverness in the autumn of the same year.

Perhaps I cannot do the chair, in reference to its claims on the church, a greater amount of justice than by quoting the words of Dr Chalmers, in his "Report on the Curriculum," communicated to the General Assembly in the spring of the following year :—

"Before entering on the theological part of our curriculum, in our proposals for which we shall be greatly more definite, it is necessary that we should advert to another class which has been more recently instituted in our New College, having been only taught for *one* season, but with the most encouraging success and a very large attendance—the class of natural science. To estimate aright the theological importance of this class, let it be considered that it includes more especially that department of natural science in which the evidences of an intelligent and designing Cause are both by far the most abundant and the most palpable; insomuch that though they be the mental phenomena, and more especially those of conscience, which afford to the eye of reason the most satisfactory demonstration of a God, it is from the one department of natural history that natural theology draws her largest resources in building up her argument for a Deity from the constitution of the material world. But over and above this positive advantage, let it be recollected that infidelity in both its branches—that is, as opposed both to natural and revealed religion—has of late fixed her arena on the field of natural history, and borrowed from this science her most formidable weapons of attack. But, however hostile to a sound faith has ever been the science that is falsely so called, the science that is truly so called, if but enough prosecuted, will be ever found to overmatch and neutralize it; so that while theology, both the natural and

the Christian, reposes on her own independent evidences, it will be found of all the other sciences, that, forming into one glorious harmony around her, they, as at once contributors and witnesses, do homage to her cause. Whether, then, as furnishing our students with armour of defence, or as gracing and enriching their minds by a positive acquisition, we do hope that the church will exact, as part of the curriculum, one year of attendance on our class of natural science, but without specifying what year, or whether it should be previous to their entrance into the hall, or during the course of their theological studies."

Had the Supreme Disposer of all events been pleased to spare the eminent individual to give to the General Assembly another "College Report" in 1847, *I know* that the same views would have been advocated; for often has he said to me, "*I regret that I had no opportunity, in my younger days, of studying this truly important subject.*"

I regret to have it in my power to state, that for four years after the erection of this chair of natural science, it received but little countenance from the church,—that its very existence was in danger by its supposed bearing on the college extension question,—that at this moment the permanence of the chair seems a doubtful point,—and that attendance on the class, by the students of divinity, was not rendered compulsory on any condition until last session.*

Since the erection of the chair, and on the supposition that all the students of divinity belonging to the Free Church were obliged to give attendance thereon, I have heard distinguished individuals of the English Church, and also of America, give forth very laudatory expressions towards our

* I understood that compulsory attendance was contemplated from the first; and I have reason to believe that very many of the members present at Inverness, including Dr Chalmers, entertained the same view. Had I anticipated the technical objections which were started a few months afterwards, I would not have become occupant of the chair, and made the sacrifices which were necessary.

church, for the intelligence and discernment which led her to go so far ahead of other ecclesiastical bodies, as to add a class of natural science to the theological institute. I wish the Rev. Principal of our College had felt himself in circumstances, on Wednesday, to enable him to express his concurrence with these sentiments.

Two years after the erection of this class in the New College, a translation of the work of Professor Oken of Zurich, on the "Elements of Physiophilosophy," made its appearance, and furnished an abundance of additional proof that our students required to study natural science, in order to comprehend the literature of the day. The character of this work will be best exhibited by a few quotations, chiefly connected with the introductory matter. Thus, at "67, *Form of God—Triunity,*" we are told:—"As the complete principle of mathematics consists of three ideas, so also does the primary principle of nature, or the Eternal. The primary principle of mathematics is 0; so soon, however, as it is actual, it is + and —; or the primary idea resolves itself in being at once into two ideas, each of which resembles the other in essence, but differs in form." Again, "98, Man is God wholly manifested. God has become man, Zero has become + —." "121, For God to become real, he must appear under the form of a sphere. There is no other form for God. God manifesting is an infinite sphere." "302, Terrestrial life originates out of water, as does the cosmic life out of light; all form originates from water." "311, Creation is a constant analysis of the æther of air, and finally of water."

This work of Oken's was referred to in the *Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal,* for April 1848, in the following complimentary strain:—"As the Ray Society has done good service to science by its various well-selected and useful publications, we presume to recommend, as one of these series, a translation of Professor Studer's admired work of 'Physical Geography and Geology.' Mr Tulk, who has added to our

English literature, through the Ray Society, an admirable translation of a celebrated work, viz. Oken's Elements of Physiophilosophy, would, we are convinced, be equally successful with a translation of Professor Studer's two volumes."

This work, then, of Oken's, which from beginning to end is a piece of visionary and loathsome materialism, is not only characterized as celebrated, but seems to be placed among "those well-selected and useful publications of the Ray Society." It is but justice to many of the members of the Ray Society to state, that the issue of this work was surreptitiously effected, that it was repudiated by a vast majority of the members, and that regulations were introduced for the guidance of the council, calculated to prevent the repetition of such an outrage on common sense in the land of Bacon.

When, in 1845, the class of natural science was instituted in the New College, and intrusted to my care, I felt myself in a position in which I could deal with the subject according to my own views, and include in the course those departments of knowledge which seemed legitimately to belong to it. The result of my deliberate judgment on the subject was announced in the *Missionary Record*, before the opening of the class, in the form of "Outlines" of the course which I intended to follow. After the experience of five sessions, I have not found occasion to depart from the plan then announced, in any of its essential features; and I cannot refrain from adding, that it did afford me a considerable degree of satisfaction when I found that, three years after the Free Church, by the institution of this chair, had publicly recognised the importance of this branch of knowledge, the University of Cambridge adopted the resolution of instituting a new academical honour, to be termed the "Natural Sciences Tripos," and assigning as the necessary qualification an acquaintance with the very subjects which I had appropriated to my class.

In nearly all the other chairs of this institution, the pro-

fessors can point out many treatises which give a general outline of the subjects discussed, and to which the student can be referred. In my own case, I am in a great measure destitute of any such help, but have attempted to supply the defect by the construction of "Institutes" for the use of the class, in which I have indicated the subjects, and their dependencies, and by which the student is enabled to trace accurately the whole of our operations, and to anticipate, in any day, the contents of the lecture.

Before proceeding to the peculiar business of the course, I have hitherto been in the habit of directing the attention of the student to the origin and value of those treasures of knowledge which have been accumulated by the sagacity and industry of our predecessors, the value of every fact, although not at the time available to a useful purpose, the peculiarities of the progress of discovery, the folly of the question *cui bono*, and the obligation on every individual to contribute his mite to the increase of that store, whence future generations will draw their supplies.

The subject of *Causation* likewise occupies our attention; for, if the statement of Hume be true, that "we have no idea of connection or power at all, and that these words are absolutely without any meaning, when employed either in philosophical reasoning, or common life," then natural religion is destitute of a foundation. But the truths of natural science furnish us with the demonstration, that we do possess a knowledge, and can see in the objects around us, the evidence not only of power, but also of purpose. The peculiar business of the course, consists in an illustration of the three following branches, into which natural science may be divided, and which seem to be naturally arranged when in the following order:—

I. Synthology, or the forces concerned in the construction of inorganic masses, including *mineralogy*, which records the character of the materials, and the mode of formation of *mineral species*.

II. Biology, or the general characters of living beings, and the peculiar organisms and functions of plants and animals constituting the sciences of phytology and zoology.

III. Geology, or the present structure of the earth, its revolutions and destinies.

I have here placed geology at the end of the course, because it requires for its suitable illustration, an acquaintance with synthology and biology, as the following illustrations may satisfactorily indicate:—

If we take a piece of that well known rock, *granite*, and attempt to discuss its characters, we find it composed of those minerals termed quartz, felspar, and mica, and we may have little difficulty in recognising any one of these three species by the external characters. But do we know any thing of the forces concerned in their formation?

The quartz consists of two elements, silicon and oxygen, and these, in the first instance, require to unite according to the laws of the attraction of combination in definite relative proportion, forming the *raw material*. After this preliminary process, the homogeneous attraction of cohesion builds up with these compound particles a mass definite in its structure, and called quartz. The felspar is of a more complicated character, consisting of silicon, aluminum, potassium, and oxygen. The preliminary processes consist in the silicon uniting with the oxygen, in a definite proportion to form silicic acid—the aluminum uniting with oxygen to form alumina, and the potassium with oxygen to form potassa—all according to an absolute law of relative quantity. When these changes have been effected, the silicic acid unites with the alumina and potassa, forming silicate of alumina and silicate of potassa, and these two silicates again combine according to a rule, and constitute the material with which the attraction of cohesion builds up the mass of felspar, according to its peculiar law of construction. The same preliminary processes take place with the mica, where the combining compound particles have iron added

to them, and cohesion builds up the mass according to the peculiar law of the species. But this is not all. The separate masses of quartz, felspar, and mica, unite under the influence of the attraction of adhesion, simply by their surfaces, and are now in the form of a rock, able to resist even a violent force when separation is attempted. Thus, the study of *synthology*, including the attractions of combination, cohesion, and adhesion, must be engaged in before we can intelligently comprehend the construction of a piece of ordinary granite.

In some of the quarries in this neighbourhood, we meet with portions of stone differing in appearance from the ordinary rock, such as I now exhibit. When reduced by the lapidary to a thin and transparent slice, and examined by the microscope, a cellular and fibrous texture can be perceived, giving unequivocal indication to an eye acquainted with the structure of living plants, that the specimen is a piece of petrified wood, and that the original was closely related to the fir tribe. In this instance, *phytology* is made to furnish the requisite help; and, indeed, without its aid, the mass could scarcely be otherwise designated than as a lump of black stone.

The specimen which I now exhibit of what is termed an *ammonite*, has, from its spiral character, been considered as a petrified coiled-up snake; and the absence of a head has given rise to absurd legends, which could be combated with difficulty if no help could be received from other quarters. Zoology, however, gives effectual aid, and justifies us, from the form and structure of the organism, to infer that it is a petrified shell, referable to the group of cephalopodous mollusca.

These illustrations serve to indicate the expediency of considering geology subsequently to the study of synthology, phytology, and zoology, on all which it is dependent for its most important illustrations.

Living beings, whether plants or animals, have their organs

constructed with materials prepared by the attraction of combination, and arranged by the vital force, rendering adhesion subservient to its purpose. Biology, therefore, requires for its anatomical illustrations an acquaintance with the inorganic forces, which we find so extensively employed.

The preceding observations will serve to indicate the rule which has been observed in assigning the order in which the subjects require to be examined; and I shall now offer a few remarks on the leading divisions of the course.*

Synthology embraces a very wide range of subjects, which I have distributed under five groups. The first refers to the preliminary processes of the attraction of combination, sometimes termed chemical attraction, of which we have given examples in the case of quartz and felspar. The laws of this force, since the doctrine of definite reciprocal multiple and compound proportions has been established, whether in reference to weight or volume, are exceedingly simple, and of easy application. But in the economy of nature, this force is, after all, a mere preparatory one, furnishing *materials* wherewith other forces may construct masses according to their own laws of aggregation.

The attraction of cohesion employs either the elementary simple particles, or those which have been prepared by the attraction of combination, and with one kind of particles only builds up masses with a definite internal structure, and a definite external form. This force, frequently denominated crystallization, gives to the mass, when unrestrained, its definite form, density, hardness, elasticity, ductility, and brittleness, and resist, in different degrees, according to the materials which have been employed, the strains of pulling, twisting, breaking, or crushing.

The attraction of adhesion produces a union of surfaces of similar or dissimilar particles or masses, and by which aggre-

* The remarks which follow are intended as an abridgement of the contents of the Institutes, it being considered as unnecessary to furnish details.

gation, apart from form and structure, is effected. Its operations are extensively exhibited in the mineral kingdom, and in organized bodies, as distinct from cohesion, and demand a minute and careful examination.

The attraction of gravitation, the operations of which are influenced by *mass* and *distance*, and measured by *weight* and *motion*, is the great aggregating power, influencing alike the products of combination, cohesion, and adhesion. It is chiefly the deranging influences which this force exerts on plants and animals, and the modifying, or counteracting effects which are requisite, that claim attention in a class of natural science.

Friction, or the resistance offered by *rubbing* surfaces, is the great antagonist to gravitation, and being necessary for the stability of many inorganic masses, and the requisite actions of living beings, demands no small degree of consideration, and holds a place, in point of importance, equal to the four kinds of attraction which have now been specified.

Mineralogy is conveniently placed as an appendix to synthology; for mineral species, whether in the gaseous, liquid, or solid form, require to be contemplated in reference to the influence which combination, cohesion, or adhesion has exercised upon them. A *chemical system* is here adopted, depending on the atomic weight of the elementary bodies, giving precedence in the distribution of the species according to the intensity of the combining, or neutralizing power of the materials. After the experience of five sessions, I am satisfied of the advantages of this system, as keeping in view the various forces which have operated on the materials, and as facilitating the study of economical mineralogy.

Biology, the second great division of our subject, while it unfolds the characteristic differences of inorganic and organized beings, and the general character of living structures, necessarily involves a discussion respecting life, as the cause or the effect of organization. The mutual dependence of plants and animals, the opinions respecting progressive de-

velopment, and the transmutation of species, the supposed existence of a *chain of being*, the laws regulating the geographical and physical distribution of plants and animals, and the essential difference between discriminative and systematical arrangements, are subjects of deep interest, and demand careful consideration. By the previous discussion of these subjects, which embrace the properties which plants and animals possess *in common*, their characteristic differences are more satisfactorily established, and a transition easily made to the study of phytology and zoology.

In the illustration of PHYTOLOGY, an introductory inquiry is instituted respecting the composition, structure, and contents of vegetable tissues, and then the growth of a plant is traced from the germination of the seed, or its equivalent, to the production of the seed again. By observing the various stages of this process, the attention is directed to the structure and functions of the root, stem, buds, and leaves, and to the duration of plants.

In the exposition of ZOOLOGY, the composition and structure of the tissues, and the important difference between organic and animal life, demand consideration in the first place, as introductory to an examination of the cutaneous, supporting, muscular, nervous, nutritive, and reproductive system of organs.

At this part of the course, I bring under the notice of the student *general psychology*, pointing out the importance of attending to the different degrees of mental development in the lower animals, as illustrative of the intellectual philosophy of man, the kind of information furnished by the senses, the operations performed on their results, and the character of the consequent volitions. The difference between the operations of reason and instinct becomes by this course easily determined, while a new or physiological arrangement of the instinctive (or active powers) into the conservative, nutritive, and procreative, is warranted by many considerations. The distinguishing character of man

and the lower animals requires examination here, as involving an important question regarding the *immaterial principle* to which vital phenomena are referred. Zoology is then brought to a close by a review of the local distribution and classification of animals.

Geology, for the reasons formerly rendered, constitutes the last branch of the course. Its injudicious, arrogant, ignorant, and we may add, infidel votaries, have excited prejudices against the science which have taken rather a deep hold of the public mind, and are not likely to be shaken until there be a cordial assent to the averment, that the works and the Word of God, when rightly interpreted, must harmonize.

As an introduction to this part of the course, the earth is considered as a planet, with a peculiar temperature dependent on its position, with a power of attraction dependent on its mass, and with a form and density which have given rise to various speculations. The cosmogonies of Leibnitz, Buffon, Hutton, Werner, Herschell, and Laplace, are here brought under review.

The peculiarities of the *atmosphere*, in reference to its contents, temperature, and currents, are next considered, involving an examination of the structure of organisms in connection with pressure, the character of *meteorites*, the influence of the daily and annual curve of temperature on plants and animals, the origin of land and sea breezes, the trade-winds, monsoons, and hurricanes.

The study of the *waters* of the globe is of deep interest, because they are the agents employed, in the economy of nature, in effecting many of the changes which are going forward around us. The supply of waters from the atmosphere, the origin and properties of springs, the peculiarities of lakes, and the characters of rivers, are here considered in detail. The examination of those important subjects, paves the way for reviewing the characters of the *sea* in reference to its saltness, its temperature, its tide-waves and wind-waves, its currents, and the relation of land and water in reference to its mean level.

This branch of the subject is brought to a close by an exposition of the characters of an *estuary*, the common space between sea and river. This involves the determination of the limits of sea and river, the origin of *deltas* and *bars*, and the influence of sea or river water on plants and animals.

The examination of the *crust* of the earth is preceded by an inquiry respecting its *temperature*, as due to the seasons, the climate, or terrestrial causes. This is followed by illustrations of its structural character, as indicated by its sedimentary and igneous, its metamorphic or vinegenous materials, together with its displacements,—paving the way for the consideration of the relative ages of the rocks by the tests of mineral character, order of superposition, and organic contents.

As the strata of the crust of the earth, hitherto examined, admits of distribution into groups or *formations*, and as these constitute coincident geological, phytological, and zoological epochs, they are considered under the influence of an old advice—*proceed from the distinct to the obscure*. Accordingly, the materials constituting the *modern epoch* or superficial strata, such as soil, peat, guano, marl, muirband, silt, diluvium, sand-drift, raised seabeaches, submarine forests, ice, and spring deposits, are illustrated in detail. There arises at this stage of the course an interesting inquiry respecting the relation of man to this epoch of the history of the earth; the condition of animal and vegetable life during the formation of the superficial strata; the species which have perished, and the supposed agency of the Noachian deluge in the formation of the superficial strata, and the distribution of their contained organisms.

The next formation in point of antiquity, which has been termed the *penult epoch*, consisting of strata differing considerably as a whole in mineral character, contains numerous remains of species of plants and animals, no individuals of which now survive. Here evidence occurs that carnivorous and insectivorous quadrupeds existed prior to the Adamic

period, and consequently involves the consideration of death as having been in the earlier periods of the earth, as at present, the concomitant of life.

The *cretaceous epoch* which follows, and consisting of its beds of chalk, green sand, wealden, oolite and lias, is remarkable for its molluscan remains, but much more so for its cold-blooded vertebrata, a circumstance which has secured for it the title of the *age of reptiles.*

The *saliferous epoch,* so distinguished by the abundance of chloride of sodium, sulphate of lime, and carbonate of magnesia, is equally interesting, on account of the remains of fishes, reptiles, and mollusca which its strata have furnished to the paleontologist.

The *carboniferous epoch,* divided into coal measures, old red sandstone, and transition rocks (or silurian), as including the oldest of the fossiliferous deposits, is calculated to awaken a deep interest. The review of the condition of animal and vegetable life during this epoch, effectually overturns the notion, that the most imperfectly organized forms and structures in plants and animals were those which appeared first on the globe, and fails to furnish any indication of great difference in the condition of the air and water, when contrasted with existing arrangements.

The *primary epoch,* or non-fossiliferous rocks, require to be studied in reference to the extent of their sedimentary, fragmentary, and crystalline characters, and the notions which have been promulgated respecting their metamorphic, plutonic, or hypogenic origin.

The subject of geology is brought to a close by an examination of volcanic products and metallic veins. During the course, at convenient times on the Saturdays, excursions in the neighbourhood are undertaken, so that the students are familiarized in a practical way with the modes of asking questions at nature, or establishing geological data. For such a purpose, it may be safely stated that the neighbourhood of Edinburgh is unparalleled.

In conducting this class, and regarding it as destined to embrace *a practical course of natural theology*, it has been my earnest endeavour to direct the minds of those under my care very closely to facts as distinct from opinions, and to weigh in the balance of a somewhat severe logic the prevailing generalizations of the day. In this manner, the younger members of the class may receive a useful mental training, while the more advanced may be excited to reconsider opinions which they may have hastily adopted. The structural character of the course is consecutive, and the object in view is to make it suggestive.

I am called upon in the discharge of my peculiar duty, to unfold to you, my students, that revelation which God has made of his attributes in that portion of his works which we propose to survey, and I feel the responsibility to be great. I trust, however, that exertion will not be wanting on my part, nor zeal on yours, and that ere long the organization of the class will be carried to such an extent, as to render attendance thereon not merely a duty but a privilege.

May the great Creator give us wisdom to conduct our inquiries, and may He qualify us for closing every session by exclaiming with intelligent minds, "O Lord our Lord! how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Of a truth, Thou art "wonderful in counsel and excellent in working."

THE END.

EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY JOHNSTONE AND HUNTER, 104 HIGH STREET.

Date Due

TU56
E24
Y
1850

8-27-57

9084A

GTU Library
3 2400 00425 6388

INAGURATION
of the NEW COLLEGE
of the FREE CHURCH